



## IMPROVING ORGANIC INTEGRITY THROUGH MASS BALANCING

Nuremberg, 12th February 2020. Featuring their software tool Check Organic – an online-platform that fosters the integrity of organic supply chains – the consultancy Organic Services is looking forward to meeting BIOFACH visitors from around the globe. Farmers, manufacturers, processors, wholesalers, retailers and certifiers as well as representatives from competent authorities can meet the integrity experts at stand 653 in hall 1. In addition, two supporting events will be held during the fair: “Fraud, gaps and loopholes: private and public counteractions and enforcement to complement regulations” on Thursday, 13th February at 1 pm in NCC Ost, room St. Petersburg and „Promoting excellence and fighting fraud with Check Organic“ on Friday, 14th February at 12 am in NCC Ost, room Prag.

Since organic products sell for higher prices than conventional ones, they represent an ideal fraud target. Although organic regulators identified this risk more than 30 years ago, the established organic control systems are not designed for our globalised, digitalised, fast world. As a consequence, severe scandals keep shattering the sector. As long as certification and product transaction data is not shared by certifiers and companies, falsified certificates travel easily along supply chains, creating prompt monetary results for criminals abusing our system.

### **Fraud detection and prevention measures are needed – and they already exist**

Fraud endangers the integrity and credibility of the entire organic sector. Therefore, comprehensive international, national and local fraud prevention and detection measures are required. “Despite all efforts to improve the regulations and components of the organic guarantee system, fraud is ongoing. Technologies and tools for improving, if not solving, the core problems are available”, says Gerald A. Herrmann, director of Organic Services. His consultancy has developed such a tool: Check Organic, a non-analytical organic integrity platform.

### **Mass balancing compares organic production volumes and trade volumes**

Check Organic utilises real-time certification and product transaction data by farmers, manufacturers, processors, wholesalers, retailers and certification bodies. Based on this data, the tool maps the flow of goods, monitors the volumes of traded organic produce and calculates a mass balance. Whilst checking the plausibility of produced vs. sold organic quantities, it considers the actual acreage of organically farmed land with its production potential. Via an intuitive traffic light system, Check Organic then warns supply chain parties if more produce is being sold than could actually be grown. The tool is tested and ready to be used at large scale. Within the EU-funded Food Integrity Project, it has further been proved applicable as “Check Integrity” for any commodity that has a product claim to defend.



### System out roll via bottom up and top down approach

As a system is only as good as its data, organic supply chain parties and certifiers worldwide are encouraged to provide information to the Check Organic platform. Participation will create a transparency level that will not only ensure the integrity of supplies, but also increase competitiveness towards those who prefer to conceal their business practices. Already today, Check Organic serves as a reliable real-time data base within national and international supply chain projects. But a systemic change cannot only be based on examples and voluntariness, because concerns about competition and consumer reaction amongst companies make many supply chain actors reluctant to share information on a voluntary basis. To break down these reservations, it is the responsibility of competent authorities to change the rules of the game in favour of those showing transparency. Therefore, talks with the National Organic Program (NOP) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the European Commission are under way.

### About Organic Services

Organic Services is an international consultancy firm based in Germany. Its services enhance sustainability, integrity and business success throughout the organic food industry. Since its foundation in 2004, the company has specialised in providing software-based integrity solutions like Check Organic, which enable producers, processors, traders, certifiers and authorities to manage traceability, quality, auditing and certification processes along the supply chain. Following an interdisciplinary approach, the consultancy also offers strategic and organisational business development, market expertise, project development, policy advice and organises conferences. As a competent partner, Organic Services helped to set up the BIOFACH fairs in China, Brazil and India and has been organising the BIOFACH Congress in Nuremberg since 2006.

### BIOFACH-Events by Organic Services

Fraud, gaps and loopholes: private and public counteractions and enforcement to complement regulations	13.02.2020 / 1 - 2:45 pm / Room St. Petersburg / NCC Ost
Professionalising group certification with Group Integrity	13.02.2020 / 5 - 5:45 pm / Room Prag / NCC Ost
Professionalising small and local certifiers with Ecert Basic	14.02.2020 / 11 - 11:45 am / Room Prag / NCC Ost
Promoting excellence and fighting fraud with Check Organic	14.02.2020 / 12 - 12:45 pm / Room Prag / NCC Ost

### Contact Organic Services

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### Our software solutions for the organic sector

