

STATEMENT FROM THE ORGANIC MOVEMENT

Elevating truly regenerative agriculture

The organic movement welcomes the focus on regenerative principles and practices where it delivers truly transformative food and farming systems and caution against use of the term in ways that divert attention, policy, and investments from more transformative solutions.

1. Organic agriculture is rooted in regenerative principles and practices

Regenerative principles are born of the indigenous knowledge that has inspired organic pioneers and are deeply embedded in the global organic principles of health, ecology, fairness, and care. Organic principles are truly regenerative and most regenerative practices are already carried out by organic farmers across the globe. We are proud that organic pioneer Sir Albert Howard first used the term “regenerative” in 1943 and that “regenerative agriculture” was coined by organic pioneer Robert Rodale in the 1980s to describe the goals of organic farming and emphasize the regeneration of soil and biodiversity as central to all our work.

2. We welcome serious regenerative actors as natural allies bringing new inspiration

We value the work of the regenerative movement that is inspiring many farmers to adopt more regenerative practices. Regenerative actors direct our attention to areas where our movement can improve and develop in order to speak to farmers, market actors and consumers and create stronger momentum, partnerships and resource flows to organic transition.

We recognise the need for the organic movement to foster stronger collaborations with serious regenerative actors and our many partners in the agroecological movement. Together, organic, agroecological, and serious regenerative movements are the alternative to degenerative agricultural systems. We are stronger together. And we see opportunities to learn from each other and work more closely on decolonizing our certification systems, communicating our impact, and

presenting a viable widespread alternative to industrial agriculture that the market, policy makers and investors can support.

3. We are alarmed by widespread misuse of ‘regenerative’ diverting focus from more transformative solutions

We reject the co-option and misleading use of ‘regenerative’, where highly degenerative practices like pesticide and synthetic fertilizer use continue, and where claims are based on minor changes to farming that don’t address the urgent crises of our times, yet divert attention and resources from whole-farm and whole-systems solutions.

4. We reaffirm the strengths of organic as a platform in the market, in policy and for farmers

We recognize the unique and valuable contribution of organic standards and the organic certification system for providing strong consumer and supply chain guarantees, a clear market for farmers, and a solid tool for policy makers seeking to support well-defined, holistic and transformative solutions in farming and food. The translation of our principles into strict legal standards in major markets across the globe creates comprehensive benefits, covering soil health, biodiversity, animal welfare and ecosystem resilience, without reliance on synthetic pesticides, fossil-fuel based fertilizers or GMOs. We remain committed to continual improvement and innovation of our systems to enhance their integrity and inclusivity.

The world organic movement is united in actions. Globally and nationally, we will:

- Rededicate ourselves to the spirit, principles and social fabric of organics in our engagement of farmers. We recognize third party certification as an effective tool for our movement, but we seek to engage all farmers, certified or uncertified who are farming using organic methods and principles as their guiding star.
- Recognize that organic farming has not yet realized all its goals, and we will continue to develop organic farming practices and standards to include more regenerative organic best practices.
- Stand with and collaborate in deep solidarity with the Agroecology Movement in improving and elevating truly transformative organic and agroecological alternatives to degenerative food systems worldwide. In particular, we will together support the organic and agroecological principle of fairness, creating food sovereignty, cooperative ownership and a fair sharing of risks and rewards in food supply chains.
- Seek collaborations with serious regenerative actors towards shared goals of inspiring, empowering and supporting farmers, policy makers and market actors to transition to truly regenerative agriculture, as well as actions to create supportive policy.
- Call out greenwashing in the use of “regenerative” by less serious actors.
- Create an understanding of “regenerative” as primarily an aspirational term.
- Recognize that organic farming already offers a regenerative option that both policymakers and the market can support. We welcome the recognition of practices that are integral to organic and regenerative (like cover-cropping and crop rotation) as baseline requirements in subsidy programmes and corporate sustainability initiatives. However, we caution against the broad use of the term ‘regenerative’ in policy schemes or consumer-facing claims, as the lack of clear definitions can be confusing and misleading.
- Support and strengthen our members and allies confronted with misleading, regenerative policy agendas pushed by strong corporate and philanthropic interests.
- Ensure organic certification as the best guarantee of regenerative approaches and outcomes, continually raising the bar on organics while ensuring that certification is much more reward than burden for farmers.
- Ensure that any subsidy measures for regenerative agriculture focusing on regenerative outcomes or practices are fully accessible for organic farmers.
- Promote organic as the most credible foundation for regenerative practices, policy initiatives, corporate branding and product claims.
- Combat a misleading “beyond organic” narrative based on unhelpful comparisons between aspirational (regenerative) principles and minimum (organic) standards, highlighting regenerative principles and practices in organic; and elevating organic minimum standards as a unique added value for consumers, farmers and policy makers.
- Improve organic communications towards a more aspirational, optimistic, values-based and plain-spoken communication and call-to-action from organic voices, with a stronger nature aesthetic, bringing the regenerative organic narrative, including focus on soil health and climate, front and center in organic communications.
- Engage market actors and investors in creating awareness of organic as providing a regenerative pathway, and creating dialogue on the specific needs and opportunities for partnerships developing organic.
- Reaffirm the value of the organic guarantee of practices and will co-develop solutions integrating metrics for documentation of outcomes in ways that are useful for farmers and meaningful for policy makers, investors and supply chain partners.

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