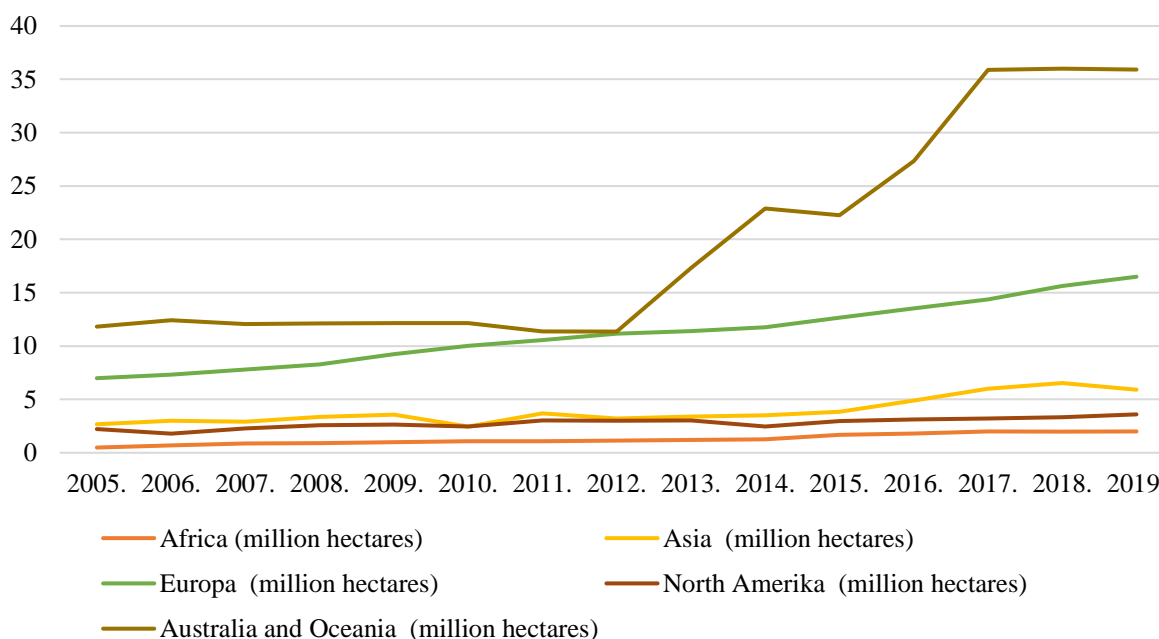


## GROWING ROLE OF ORGANIC FARMING IN THE WORLD – GENERAL SITUATION

The importance of organic farming is growing around the world. Globally, 1.5% of the world's agricultural land is currently organic. Around the world, between 2005 and 2019, the agricultural area involved in organic farming expanded to 72.3 million hectares, but the rate of growth varied by continent (Figure 1) (Central Statistical Office).



**Figure 1.: Size of agricultural land included in organic farming by continent (million ha)**

*Source:* Central Statistical Office based on FIBL and IFOAM

The region with the largest organic agricultural area is Oceania (35.9 million hectares), where half of the world's organic agricultural area is located. This is followed by Europe (16.5 million hectares, 23%), Latin America (8.3 million hectares, 11%), Asia (5.9 million hectares, 8%), North America (3.6 million hectares, 5 %) and Africa (2 million hectares, 3%) followed.

The countries with the most organic agricultural land are Australia (35.7 million hectares), Argentina (3.7 million hectares) and Spain (2.4 million hectares).

Regionally, within all agricultural areas, Oceania enjoys priority, where 9.6% of all agricultural areas are ecological areas, and Europe, where this value is 3.3%, including 8.1% in the territory of the European Union. In some countries, the share of ecological areas is much higher, in Liechtenstein this value is 41% and in Austria 26.1%.

While organic agricultural areas in Africa, Europe, Latin America and North America also increased in 2019, a decrease of 7.1 percent, i.e. about 0.45 million hectares, occurred in Asia, mainly for the organic areas reported by China and due to the area reductions reported by Oceania. The largest increase, measured in absolute value, took place in Europe (5.9%, which means an increase of 0.9 million hectares).

Regarding the composition of organic agricultural areas, it can be said that more than two-thirds of them, i.e. about 49 million hectares, are used as pasture land. The 13.1 million hectares of arable land account for 18% of organic agricultural land. Cereals are mainly grown on arable

land (5.1 million hectares), followed by green fodder (about 3.2 million hectares), oilseeds (1.7 million hectares), dried legumes and vegetables. Permanent plants account for 7% of organic agricultural land (4.7 million ha).

In 2019, around 3.1 million organic producers were registered, 51% of them farmed in Asia and 27% in Africa. Europe's share is 14%, Latin America's 7%. Most producers are located in India (1,366,226 people), followed by Uganda (210,353 people) and Ethiopia (203,602). An increase of 347,000 people, i.e. 12.5%, can be observed in the number of producers in 2019.

The sale of organic food and beverages exceeded the total value of EUR 106 billion. In terms of sales, the largest markets in 2019 were the United States (44.7 billion euros), Germany (12.0 billion euros), and France (11.3 billion euros). The highest consumption per person was measured in Denmark in 2019 (344 Euros/person). The share of the organic market is 12.1% in Denmark, 10.4% in Switzerland, and 9.3% in Austria.

**CAPTIVATE** project, funded under the Erasmus+ program of the European Union, is dedicated to knowledge transfer and vocational training of farmers and agricultural advisors related to the current EU strategic lines, such as the Green Deal, Farm to Fork Strategy and Organic Action Plan. One of the CAPTIVATE's main objectives is that farmers better understand conditionality, eco-scheme and rural development regulations, they choose and participate in the certain schemes with more responsibility and awareness, carrying out the new CAP measures more effectively.

The article primarily provides farmers and consultants with basic information about the current situation of organic farming. Within the framework of the CAPTIVATE program, it provides information on the topic of sustainable and organic farming.

## References

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