



Bio Suisse and Naturland sign cooperation agreement

Working together to strengthen international organic agriculture

Basel, 7 October 2021

Naturland and Bio Suisse, German and Swiss umbrella organisations for organic agriculture, will be working together more closely in the future in their international activities. As part of their new partnership, they will focus on the issues of sustainable water management and social responsibility – two key components of a comprehensive understanding of sustainability that goes beyond the legal requirements for organic agriculture.

Balz Strasser, Managing Director of Bio Suisse, is confident of the value of the partnership: «Our strategic partnership with Naturland will raise the bar in terms how we monitor the social conditions at our international operations. In addition, our two organisations will jointly advocate for improvements in labour conditions and social issues in organic agriculture.»

«Water scarcity is a global challenge and climate change is exacerbating it. Global challenges require us to seek solutions together. By joining forces, Bio Suisse and Naturland are signalling how important international cooperation in organic agriculture is», says Steffen Reese, Managing Director of Naturland.

Guidelines for sustainable water management

As part of their joint sustainable water management strategy, the two organisations have brought their existing standards into alignment and have adopted a joint water management plan for certified operations in regions where water is scarce. Furthermore, the two organisations have developed a joint set of guidelines designed to serve as a practical tool that operations can use to improve their water management. These guidelines aim to ensure that water as a natural resource is used sustainably and to foster awareness of its increasing scarcity.

Operations are thus empowered to better understand and comply with the standards for organic agriculture that Naturland and Bio Suisse require them to meet in areas where water is scarce. The guidelines will initially be published in five languages (German, English, Spanish, Italian and French). There are plans to add more languages in the future.

Joint training of inspectors

Naturland has been doing pioneering work in social responsibility for almost 20 years now: it monitors the working conditions of all employees at certified operations for compliance with its own audit scheme. As part of this new partnership, Bio Suisse will adopt the inspection system that Naturland has developed, thus strengthening its own monitoring

mechanisms. The two organisations are also planning joint training activities for inspectors as well as a closely coordinated effort to further develop their activities and standards.

Naturland and Bio Suisse are the proprietors and guarantors of high-quality organic standards (Naturland/Naturland Fair and Bud) that go far beyond the legislation on ecological production and are also pioneers in other areas, such as biodiversity and animal welfare. Both Naturland and Bio Suisse work with thousands of organic producers around the world, which means they are promoting organic agriculture far beyond their own national borders.

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Bio Suisse is the leading organic agriculture organisation in Switzerland and is the owner of the Bud label. It was established as an umbrella organisation in 1981 and it now represents the interests of 7'450 Bud label operations and nurseries. There are also 1'150 processing and trading companies that operate under the Bud licence contract. The Bud label is sustainable because it ensures that people today have the means to live a good life without jeopardising the future of generations to come. It balances the interests of people, animals and nature. To maintain that balance in the long term, independent inspectors inspect the entire value chain once a year. www.bio-suisse.ch