

BIO SUISSE SUSTAINABILITY EVALUATION



Sustainable development is a core Bio Suisse policy. The 'Best Practice Guideline for Agriculture and Value Chains' published by IFOAM¹ in 2014 prompted Bio Suisse to scrutinize the state of sustainable development in our own association and in relation to the 'Bud' brand.

THE FIVE DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The IFOAM guideline lists five dimensions of sustainability: social, ecological, economic and cultural dimensions, as well as accountability in management. Each dimension comprises various facets, and IFOAM defines best practice objectives for each of them. The best practice objectives cover agricultural production, processing and trade, and communication with consumers. This sustainability evaluation compares best practices against the Bio Suisse standards that were in effect in 2014 as well as our activities and projects and measures the degree of performance (as 'not/low' [1 point], 'medium' [2 points] and 'high' [3 points]). Each estimate represents a critical self-assessment. The estimates were reviewed by independent experts, but this is not the same as an actual external evaluation.

SATISFYING RESULTS

The evaluation of our overall sustainability performance led to satisfying results (see table on next page). As an umbrella organization, Bio Suisse fulfilled most of the best practice criteria in the 'medium' to 'high' range. Only the area of 'transparency and reporting' fell a bit short of best practice targets. Measures for improvement have already been taken through the publication of the head office's sustainability report and the present sustainability evaluation of the association.

Evaluating our sustainability performance according to the IFOAM guideline allowed Bio Suisse to make a general assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the 'Bud' brand based on internationally established guidelines. Bio Suisse is using this evaluation as an opportunity to take further steps in the direction of sustainable development, for instance by specifying social standards.

BIO SUISSE ADMITTED TO THE IFOAM BEST PRACTICE COMMUNITY

As a result of our sustainability evaluation and the positive assessment by two independent experts, Bio Suisse was admitted as a member of the Best Practice Community that was founded by IFOAM in 2015. The Best Practice Community² is a platform where organizations can showcase their efforts to embody and spread best practices, and where they can collaborate to lead the organic sector forward towards greater sustainability.

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1 The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) is an association that aims to establish systems across the globe that make ecological, social and economic sense and are based on the principles of organic farming. The IFOAM Membership Directory comprises 800 organizations in approximately 120 countries (as of 2015).

2 <http://www.ifoam.bio/en/node/3551>

Sustainability targets defined by IFOAM

Bio Suisse evaluation/fulfillment of best practice measures (average values)

not/low; medium; high

Measures Bio Suisse has planned/taken

A. Social Dimension

Objective: Basic human rights and opportunities to attain a decent livelihood are assured.

A1. Equality and gender		x
A2. Decent livelihood		x
A3. Labour rights and human rights		x
A4. Safety and hygiene		x

B. Ecological dimension

Objective: Foster regenerative systems by improving soil quality, eliminating dependency on non-renewable resources, avoiding pollution and human-induced climate change, respecting animal welfare and enhancing the diversity within farms and their surroundings.

B1. Water quality and quantity		x
B2. Soil & fertility		x
B3. Biodiversity		x
B4. Humane and healthy animal husbandry		x
B5. Atmosphere – greenhouse gases and air pollution		x
B6. Energy		x

C. Economic dimension

Objective: Enterprises are profitable, economically resilient, and act fairly and ethically. Value creation exists in harmony with the environment and societal and cultural development.

C1. Investment		x
C2. Local economy and economic resilience		x
C3. Markets and trade		x
C4. Materials and contaminants		x

D. Cultural dimension

Objective: Individuals' ideas are encouraged. Holistic development of values, knowledge, capacities and consciousness is ongoing.

D1. Personal growth and community development		x
D2. Food security and food sovereignty		
D3. Product quality		

E. Accountability in management

Objective: Comprehensive and transparent reporting and communication processes help stakeholders address all relevant dimensions of sustainable development. Performance, ongoing improvements and shortcomings are demonstrable. Sharing knowledge is everyone's responsibility.

E1. Holistic management		x
E2. Transparency and reporting		x
E3. Participation		x