



7 March 2026

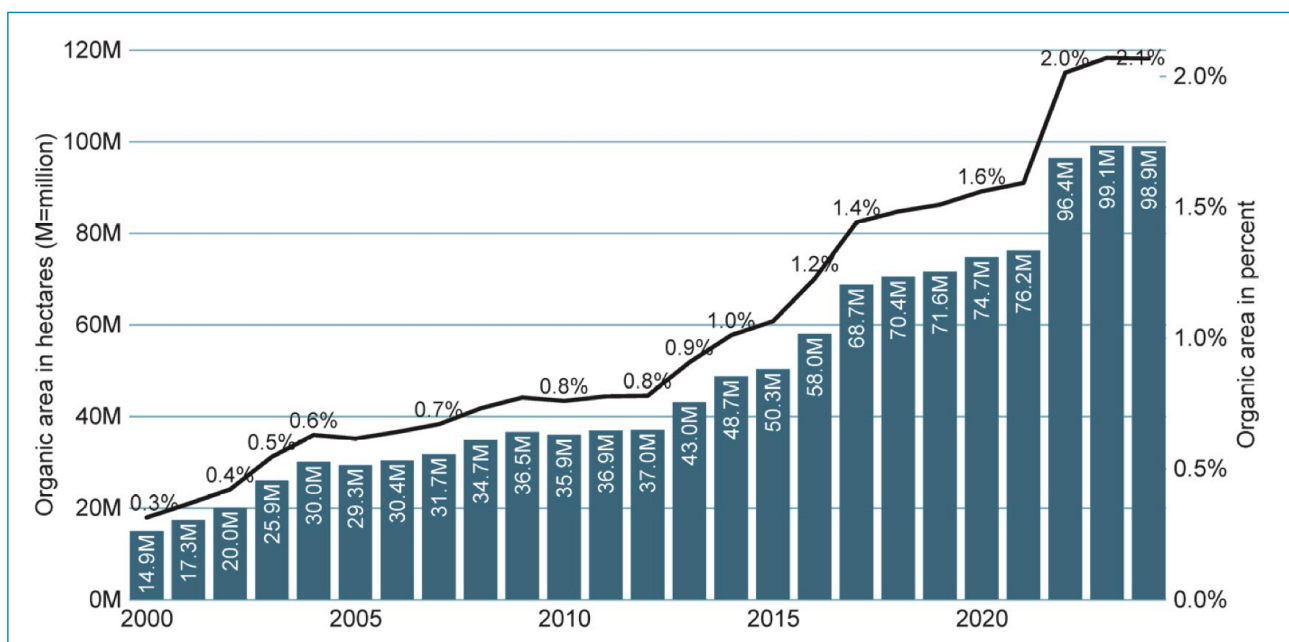
## Organic production – an update on the latest trends

### Area under organic agriculture

According to Organics International (IFOAM) [\[read\]](#), organic agriculture was using almost **100 million hectares** in the world in 2024. This amounted to 2.2% of total land used for agriculture.

This area has been growing fairly regularly since the year 2000 (see **figure 1**).

**Figure 1 – Evolution of the organic agricultural land and of its share in total land used by agriculture (2000–2024)**



Source: [Willer et al., 2026](#).

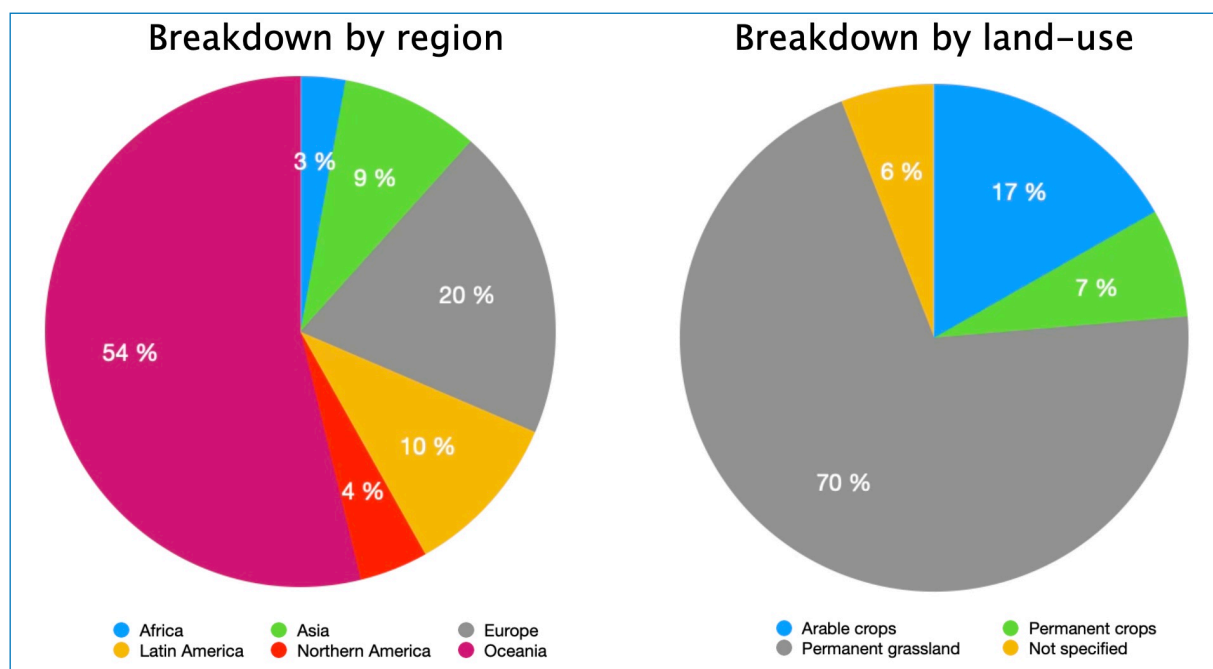
Most of the land used by organic farming is under permanent grassland (70% of the total), followed by arable annual crops (17%) and permanent crops (7%) (see **figure 2**).

It is in Oceania that the largest area under organic agriculture (mostly permanent grassland) is found, followed by Europe, Latin America, Asia, Northern America<sup>1</sup> and Africa. In Europe, land under organic farming is predominantly used for

<sup>1</sup> Organics International groups under “Northern America” the US and Canada.

arable crops and permanent grassland (43% of the total each), followed by permanent crops (12%). In Asia and Africa organic farming land is in its great majority used for arable crops. **Table 1** gives the detailed land use data.

**Figure 2 – Global breakdown of organic farming area (2024)**



Source: based on data from [Willer et al., 2026](#).

**Table 1 – Land use under organic farming in 2024 (in thousand hectares)**

	Africa	Asia	Europe	Latin America	Northern America	Oceania	Total
<b>Arable crops</b>	1070	4393	8403	538	2072	73	<b>16549</b>
<b>Permanent crops</b>	1629	1017	2435	1076	663	31	<b>6851</b>
<b>Permanent grassland</b>	16	10	8409	7474	1153	52546	<b>69608</b>
<b>Not specified</b>	89	3281	333	1212	425	551	<b>5883</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2804</b>	<b>8701</b>	<b>19580</b>	<b>10300</b>	<b>4313</b>	<b>53201</b>	<b>98891</b>

Source: based on data from [Willer et al., 2026](#).

## Main organic products

### From annual organic crops

The top five annual organic crops are, by order of importance, cereals (mostly wheat and maize), plants harvested green, oilseeds (predominantly soybean and sunflower seeds), textile crops and dry pulses.

The three top fastest growing crops, over the last decade, are medicinal and aromatic plants (+322%), textile crops (+161%) and root crops (+137%).

### From permanent crops

The top five permanent organic crops are, by order of importance, nuts, olives, coffee, grapes and cocoa.

The three fastest growing permanent crops, over the last decade, are tea/mate (+191%), nuts (152%) and permanent medicinal and aromatic plants (+136%). Among the most important crops, only organic coffee diminished during the same period (-17.3%).

### From organic wild collection and beekeeping

The largest organic wild collection and beekeeping areas are found in Finland (nearly 7 million ha), China (3.3 million ha) and Zambia (2.5 million ha).

The greatest number of organic beehives are kept in Europe (43%), followed by Africa and Latin America.

### Organic aquaculture

Organic aquaculture produced more than 1 million tons in 2024, mostly in China (more than 80%)<sup>2</sup>. However, this weighs less than 1% in total aquaculture production.

### **Organic producers and other operators**

Altogether, in 2024, there were almost **5 million farmers** involved in organic agriculture throughout the world (less than 1% of the total number of farmers). Most of them were from Asia (particularly from India), followed by Africa and Europe.

There were also near to **140,000 processors** (of which more than half in Europe) and around **20,000 importers and exporters** active in organic value chains. **Table 2** gives the detailed data.

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<sup>2</sup> China produces more than half of total world aquaculture products [\[read\]](#)

**Table 2 – Organic producers, processors, importers and exporters by region in 2024 (in thousands)\***

	Producers	Processors	Importers	Exporters	Total
<b>Africa</b>	1366	2	0	1	<b>1369</b>
<b>Asia</b>	2711	16	1	2	<b>2730</b>
<b>Europe</b>	491	94	8	5	<b>598</b>
<b>Latin America</b>	238	23	2	1	<b>264</b>
<b>Northern America</b>	24	2			<b>26</b>
<b>Oceania</b>	16	2		0	<b>18</b>
<b>World</b>	<b>4846</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5005</b>

Source: [Willer et al., 2026](#).

\* This data is not complete, as not all countries provide figures for processors, importers, exporters or other operator types. For example, beekeepers, smallholder groups, aquaculture enterprises, and collectors are not included.

## Trade

Data on trade of organic goods is incomplete at world level.

The two main importers of organic products are the **US** and the **EU**. They imported respectively 3.3 and 2.6 million tons in 2024.

**Latin America** is by far the largest exporter of organic products (3.2 million tons), with **Mexico** the leading country (136,000 tons).

**Bananas, oilcakes, and sugar** accounted for 42% of total imports of organic commodities by the US and EU, in 2024. Banana imports amounted to around 1.4 million tons.

## Retail

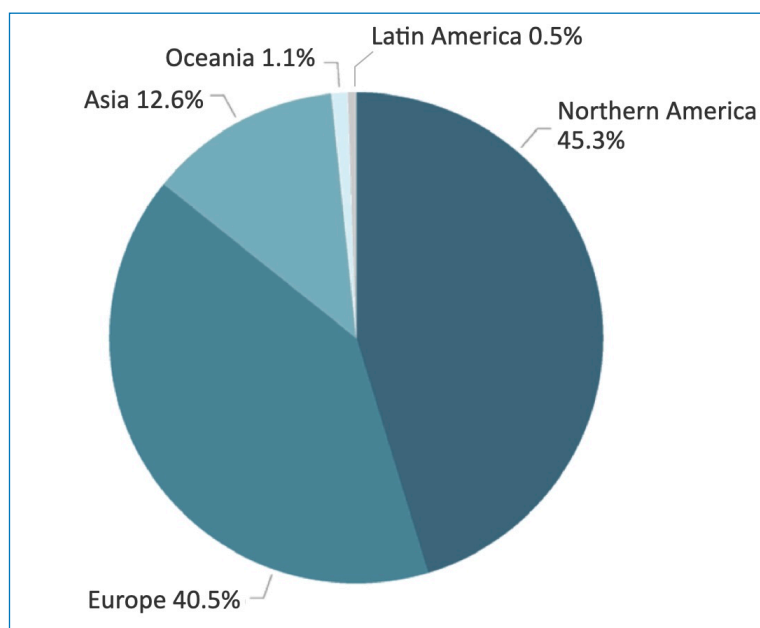
For many countries, the data available on retail sales of organic products are partial or outdated.

Yet, it is possible to estimate that, for 2024, total retail sales amounted to almost **145 billion euros (USD157 billion)**. **Figure 3** shows a regional breakdown of this figure.

The first top countries for sales were the **US** (USD65 billion), followed by **Germany** (USD18.0 billion), **China** (USD17 billion), **France** (USD13 billion) and **Canada** (USD6 billion).

Highest per capita consumption of organic products was observed in **Switzerland**, followed by **Denmark, Austria, Luxembourg** and **Germany**.

**Figure 3 – Retail sales by region (2024) (in %)**



Source: [Willer et al., 2026](#).

### Comparing the European Union and United States/Canada

	European Union	United States and Canada
<b>Population (2024)</b>	450 million	381 million
<b>Area under organic farming</b>	18.1 million has	4.3 million has
<b>Percentage of total farming area</b>	11.1 %	0.9 %
<b>Arable crops area</b>	7.7 million has	2.1 million has
<b>Permanent crops area</b>	2.3 million has	0.7 million has
<b>Permanent grassland area</b>	7.9 million has	1.2 million has
<b>Main arable crops</b>	Cereals: 2.2 million has	Cereals: 0.9 million has
	Green fodder: 2.2 million has	Plants harvested green: 0,6 million has
	Dry pulses: 0.5 million has	Oilcrops: 0.2 million has
<b>Main permanent crops</b>	Olives: 0.6 million has	Berries: 0.004 million has
	Grapes: 0.5 million has	Temperate fruits: 0.001 million has
	Nuts: 0.4 million has	Grapes: 0.001 million has
<b>Wild collection area</b>	7.4 million has	1 million has
<b>Producers</b>	438 000	24 000
<b>Processors</b>	89 000	2000
<b>Importers</b>	7 000	?
<b>Retail sales</b>	49.5 billion euros	65.7 billion euros
<b>Development of retail sales (2004/2023)</b>	3.6 %	?
<b>Organic share of the total market</b>	4.5 %	?
<b>Per capita consumption</b>	110 euros	170 euros
<b>Organic imports</b>	Bananas: 0.73 million tons	Berries: 1.2 billion euros (US)
	Oilcakes: 0.21 million tons	Vegetables: 1.1 billion euros (US)
	Sugar: 0.16 million tons	Grains and oilseeds : 0.8 billion euros (US)



## Conclusion

Organics International (IFOAM) have been publishing their yearly The World of Organic Agriculture since the year 2000 [[check the series](#)].

It is a very valuable publication for whoever is interested in organic agriculture, as it offers the best statistics available, and a wealth of information on various aspects of organic agriculture and its evolution over time.

As can be seen from this summary article, organic agriculture is growing and provides an extraordinary diversity of products, both primary and processed.

Its future growth will certainly contribute to a greater sustainability of the world's food systems and to a better health of consumers [[read an example here](#)].

More information on organic agriculture can be found [on our thematic page on this topic](#).

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To know more:

- Willer, H., Schlatter, B., and J. Trávníček (Eds.), [The World of Organic Agriculture. Statistics and Emerging Trends 2026](#), Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL, Frick, and IFOAM – Organics International, Bonn, 2026.

Selection of earlier articles published on [hungerexplained](#) related to this topic:

- [Eating organic food helps to reduce risks of cancer](#), 2018.
- [Researchers show that organic agriculture generates more economic value than conventional agriculture](#), 2015.

Consult our thematic page on "[Organic agriculture](#)".