

ORGANIC AGRICULTURE AND PRODUCTS CERTIFIED UNDER QUALITY SCHEMES IN ROMANIA

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Abstract. *Organic farming and agri-food products certified through voluntary quality schemes are areas of interest for both authorities and consumers. In recent years, this sector has been developing steadily in Romania, and producers have begun to realize the potential for growth in this niche sector. This research aims to highlight the stage of development of organic agriculture and certified products in Romania. Nationally, it was observed that organic farming covers approximately 0.5 million hectares, unevenly distributed across land use categories. This area represents only 3.5% of the national agricultural land, a proportion well below the European target of 25% of the EU's agricultural land, set to be achieved by 2030. Regarding agri-food products certified through voluntary quality schemes, there are 3815 certified products nationally, unevenly represented in certification categories, with the majority belonging to mountain products.*

Keywords: Organic agriculture, voluntary certification, agri-food products, digitalization

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1. Introduction

We find ourselves at the intersection of two significant decades, as declared by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO): the Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028) [7] and the Decade for Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), while also commencing the European effort under the auspices of the New European Green Deal (2021-2027) [14]. Simultaneously, EU Faced the COVID-19 pandemic, an unprecedented challenge, with complex effects on the economy, public health, and food systems. The EU's response includes a recovery plan supported by the "Next Generation EU" instrument (COM(2021)) [6].

The European Green Deal was conceived as a strategic and legislative plan with a significant impact on the European economy and society, its primary

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