

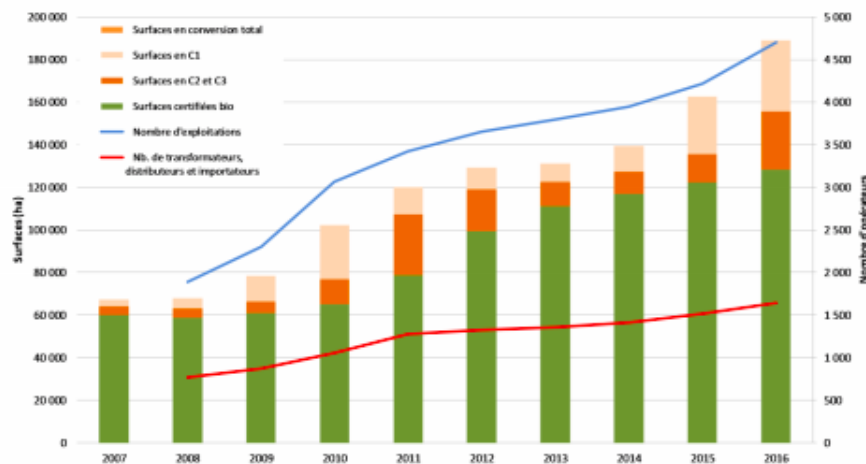
Policy Brief: *Enhancing the competitiveness of SME in the organic sector (1000-1200 words max.)*

1. Overview of the Agri-food sector in region Nouvelle-Aquitaine

With 85 000 farms, the region Nouvelle-Aquitaine is the first european region in terms of total number of farms and utilised agricultural area : 3,9 millions million hectares, i-e 45 % of the total area of the regional land. Crop production represent 69% of the farming, and only 31% for animal production. Most of the crop production is in ex Poitou-Charentes and ex Aquitaine while the animal production is more important in ex Limousin. Nouvelle-Aquitaine also gathers two wine areas (Cognac and Bordeaux). Wine products represent ¼ of the agricultural production of the region, with 228 000ha of vineyards, and 90% of the production of protected designations of origin.

Agriculture is the first economy of the region, with more than 180.000 farming jobs and 9483 agro-food businesses employing 57 530 people. There is a strong social challenge around the agri-food sector in the region.

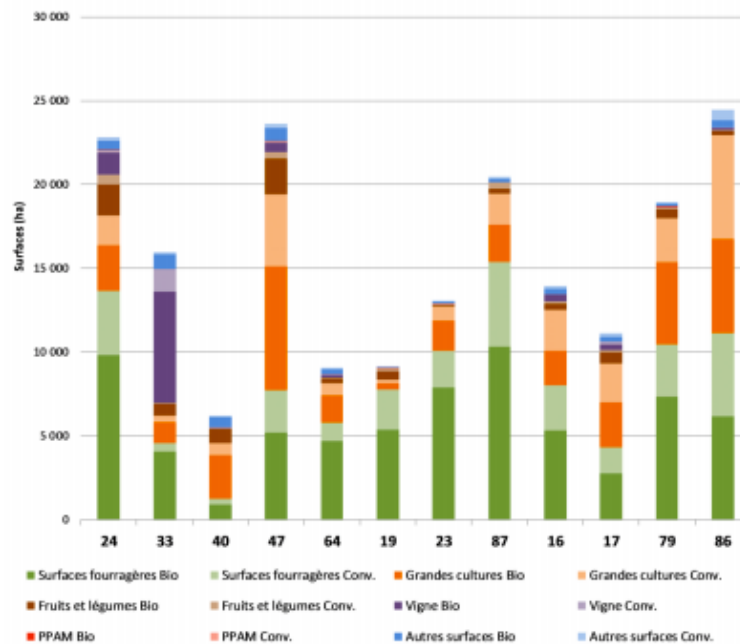
Evolution des surfaces et du nombre d'opérateurs engagés dans la production biologique en 2016



With 4700 organic farms, region Nouvelle-Aquitaine is the third french region for organic, also with its 188 867 ha in organic, representing 4,8% of the regional acreage.

The organic acreage grew by 20% between 2014 and 2016, and there are now more than 1600 organic businesses. Nouvelle-Aquitaine is the leader in organic for production such as poultry, cereals crops, fruits, sheeps and goats.

Répartition des surfaces (ha) certifiées bio et en conversion par filière et département en 2016



2. Policy context - Current regional support measures.

A common fund from State and European funds (EARDF) of 85 million euros Agriculture was dedicated to support the organic value chain of the region for 5 years, but was mainly used during the first 2 years. The regional council decided to participate to the funding of organic farming and a regional pacte for organic farming has been developed together with the State in order to support the growth of the organic sector. Most of the financial support measures that make up our OAP come from this pacte, using regional, national and European funds.

Instrument	Responsible	Beneficiary	Financial contribution	Production	Processing	& Commercialisation marketing	Training & advice	Education	Innovation	Value chain efficiency & governance
Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 Aquitaine – Measure 1 “Knowledge transfer and information actions”	Regional Managing Authority Region Nouvelle-Aquitaine	Farmers and their associations, agro-food SME (not only organic operators)	4,5 millions euros of EARDF co-funds (53%)	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 Aquitaine –	Regional Managing Authority Region Nouvelle-	Farmers and their associations	4,5 millions euros of EARDF co-funds (53%)		x	x				x

Measure 3 "Quality schemes for agricultural products, and foodstuffs"	Aquitaine									
Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 Aquitaine – Measure 4 "Investments in physical assets"	Regional Managing Authority Region Nouvelle-Aquitaine	Farmers and their associations	76 750 000 € of EARDF co-funds (53%)		x	x				x
Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 Aquitaine – Measure 6 "Farm & business development"	Regional Managing Authority Region Nouvelle-Aquitaine	New farmers	58 750 000€ of EARDF co-funds (53 to 80%)	x						x
Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 Aquitaine – Measure 11 "Organic farming"	Regional Managing Authority Region Nouvelle-Aquitaine	Farmers and their associations	36 million € of EARDF co-funds (53 to 75%)	x	x					x
Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 Aquitaine – Measure 16 "Cooperation"	Regional Managing Authority Region Nouvelle-Aquitaine	Farmers and their associations	1 500 000€ of EARDF co-funds (53%)				x	x	x	

Other support measures for organic production specific to the Region Aquitaine

Instrument	Responsible	Beneficiary	Financial contribution	Production	Processing	Commercialisation & marketing	Training & advice	Education	Innovation	Value chain efficiency & governance
Animation and support for OFF	Region Aquitaine	Regional organic organisations	Regional budget			x	x			
Public catering	Region Aquitaine	Producers, processors	Regional budget	x	x	x				
ORAB : regional observatory for OFF	DRAAF Aquitaine	INTERBIO Nouvelle-Aquitaine, CRA, FRAB Nouvelle-Aquitaine	State budget	x	x					x
Promotion	Region Aquitaine	Regional brands,	Regional budget			x				
Funding the experiment	Region Aquitaine	Farmers	Regional budget						x	

Help for certification	Région Aquitaine	Farmers	Regional budget	x						
Chèque conseil / Advisory check	Région Aquitaine	Farmers and SMEs	Regional budget	x	x	x				
Upstream/Downstream call for proposal	Région Aquitaine	Farmers and SMEs	Regional budget	x	x					x
PCAE : Competitiveness of farms	DRAAF Aquitaine	Farmers	State Budget	x			x			
Support to processing and commercialisation	Région Aquitaine	Farmers and SMEs	Regional budget		x	x				

*(Please refer to relevant European Investment or Structural Funds e.g. ERDF, EAFRD or national fund if applicable)

** Please refer to relevant managing authorities e.g. EU, national, regional if applicable

*** Please refer to relevant EU, national, regional co-financing

3. Relevance of the regional policy support for the development and implementation of your action plan

As mentioned in section 2, the regional pacte for organic farming, developed by the Regional Council and the State, is the basis of our OAP. Thus, measures of support are integrated in the regional agricultural policy. Some of those measures come directly from the European funds (CAP, ERDF, EAFRD), and some are from the Ministry of Agriculture of from the Regional council.

Further to those funds, our OAP aims at mobilising other European funds such as Horizon 2020 or Erasmus + funds, but also to create a dynamic to discuss the funding needs after 2020. Indeed, there is a will to start reflecting on how organic food and farming could be supported (for example by giving more value to positive amenities). Indeed, the CAP funds for conversion and maintenance in organic are not sufficient as it is reflected by the lack of funds available. Moreover, as conversion have been very important in the las few years, it is very important to make sure that the value chains are strong and organised, in order to guarantee the viability of the sector and that the added value is created at a regional level. Finally, our plan will also focus on the possibilities of enhancing private funding to support the organic SMEs.

4. Recommendations for regional policymakers to improve the current policy environment

Commitment of the policy makers is very important for the development of the plan, and we have been lucky to have full support from the regional council. The participative approach of the project, and the fact that we gathered various stakeholders around the table, has given more importance to the project, and strengthen the links between those partners. Indeed, the fact that we all worked together to find the best options for the OAP make the basis for the implementation stronger.

The action plan will help to start a reflection on the future of policies and funding for the organic sector. Indeed, working groups will be set up to engage a broad work, following and monitoring the implementation, but also to discuss possibilities for the future such as the recognition of the positive effects of organic farming, but also the development of the organic sector at a wider level, implying the certification of forests and lakes for example, to create a strong dynamic on the territory.