

The Organic Summit 2025 in Copenhagen: A joint comment by Økologisk Ungdomsbevægelse (DK) and Junges Bioland e.V. (DE)

The Organic Summit 2025 in Copenhagen provided an important opportunity to discuss the future of organic farming in Europe. Under the Danish EU Presidency, around 450 guests from politics, practice and civil society came together to discuss ways of achieving the target of 25% organic farming in the EU by 2030. In order to actively put the importance of the younger generation for this transformation on the agenda, the organic youth associations Økologisk Ungdomsbevægelse from Denmark and Junges Bioland e.V. from Germany participated in the summit with own delegations.

Our participation offered a good chance: in an open workshop, the role of young people for Europe's agricultural transformation was highlighted, contacts were made with political decision-makers from all over the EU and valuable discussions were held. We also believe that the summit's basic idea of positioning organic farming as a key factor for sustainable agriculture is a correct and important signal.

At the same time, we believe the summit revealed significant weaknesses. While many panelists underlined the importance of the younger generation, we noted with concern that young voices were not represented on the podiums at all. This gap points to the need for stronger and more consistent youth involvement. The importance of organic farming for sustainable development has been enthusiastically emphasized in numerous pretty speeches. However, this mainly had the effect that the limited time available was spent on things that were already known, rather than on the discussions that were actually necessary to find practical solutions for organic farming throughout Europe. Issues that are crucial for the future of organic farming, such as the relationship between organic and regenerative agriculture or the role of new genomic techniques, were only touched upon superficially. If we as the organic movement in Europe do not take a proactive approach to these discussions, we run the risk of being overwhelmed by developments elsewhere. Organic farming has always been strong at setting the agenda on important issues, actively shaping debates and thus being THE driver of innovation in agriculture. Rather than fostering the urgently needed open debate, discussions remained shallow and evasive although rather critical voices were present. Also, the charter adopted at the end, albeit an important symbolic outcome, appeared to reflect pre-defined priorities rather than emerging directly from the discussions at the summit. We also felt that the debate formats could be strengthened: the time for exchange was often too short, and a more balanced composition of panels would allow for deeper dialogue. Finally, the timing of the summit during the parliamentary summer recess limited the presence of some key political actors.

For us as young organic farmers and future shapers of agriculture, one thing remains clear: visibility alone is not enough. If Europe wants to achieve its goals in organic farming, it needs to seriously involve the younger generation. We not only bring new

ideas to the table, but also the perspective of those who will have to work with today's political decisions in the coming decades.

This gives us clear expectations for future summits:

- Young farmers must be actively involved in the programme items, panels and decision-making processes
- Discussions must not be reduced to symbolic question and answer sessions, but require open spaces for exchange and dissent
- Results must be substantial and provide concrete options for action in politics and practice
- Scheduling should be done in such a way that key political decision-makers can actually participate
- Diversity and balance in the composition of panels must be actively ensured

The Organic Summit 2025 was an important event. But more effort is needed to create a credible and effective forum for the future of organic farming. We, the younger generation, are ready to take on responsibility, but we expect our voices to be not only heard, but also seriously taken into account. Then, we are convinced, we can achieve our common goals for organic farming in Europe.