

# ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN ROMANIA: STATUS AND PERSPECTIVES

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## Abstract

Romania’s organic agriculture expanded steadily between 2021 and 2024. According to MADR (2023), the Romanian Rural Network (2024), and international reports, organic farmland reached 644,520 ha in 2022, approx. 693,000 ha in 2023, and continued to grow modestly in 2024, approaching 710,000 ha (approx. 4.6% of Utilized Agricultural Area - UAA). Certified operators increased to nearly 14,000 in 2023. The production mix remains dominated by cereals, oilseeds, and pastures, while horticulture and medicinal plants hold smaller but high-value shares. The operator structure shows over 95% producers and less than 2% processors, highlighting a structural bottleneck. Romania remains a net exporter of raw organic materials with a domestic market below €100 million. At EU level, organic farmland reached 17.7 million ha in 2023, with global organic retail sales estimated at €136.4 billion. These trends illustrate Romania’s opportunities and gaps compared to European and global benchmarks.

**Keywords:** organic farming; Romania; MADR; operators; EU; Biofach 2025

**Introduction.** Organic farming in Romania began in the 1990s and accelerated after EU accession in 2007. Official MADR statistics show 644,520 ha in 2022, growing to approx. 693,000 ha in 2023, and projected near 710,000 ha in 2024. Despite this progress, Romania’s share of organic farmland (approx. 4.6% of UAA) remains below the EU average (approx. 9%). The domestic market is

underdeveloped, with consumption below €3 per capita compared to more than €50 in Western Europe. This study synthesizes national and European sources (MADR, RRN-PAC, FiBL/IFOAM, Eurostat, ECA 2024, Biofach 2025) to evaluate Romania’s organic sector in the context of global and EU trends.

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

The study draws on official Romanian sources (MADR, 2023; RRN-PAC, 2024), EU statistics (Eurostat, 2024), and international reports (FiBL/IFOAM 2024–2025, USDA/FAS 2024). Biofach 2025 insights were integrated into the discussion to connect Romania’s trajectory to broader global market trends. Data for 2023–2024 remain provisional and may be revised.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Organic farmland (2000–2024)

The organic area expanded from less than 100,000 ha in 2000 to 644,520 ha in 2022, approx. 693,000 ha in 2023, and approx. 710,000 ha in 2024. This steady increase reflects growing support measures and farmer interest.

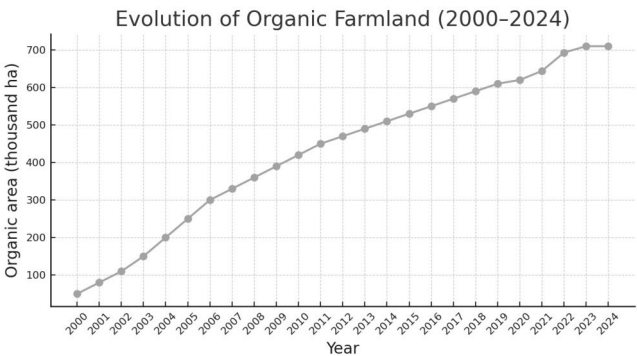


Figure 1 Evolution of Organic Farmland (2000-2024)

### Certified operators (2000–2024)

The number of certified operators reached 14,000 in 2023 and 14,100 in 2024, showing a

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stabilisation trend after a decade of growth. more than 95% of these operators are primary producers.

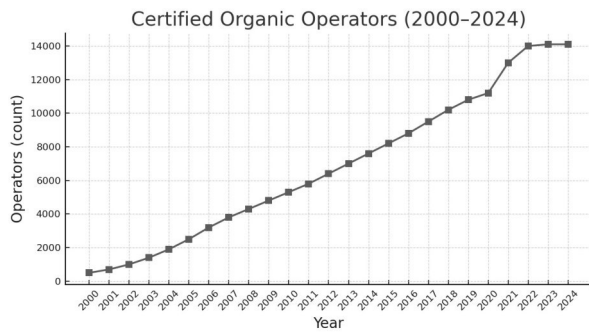


Figure 2 **Certified Organic Operators(2000-2024)**  
Crop structure (2021)

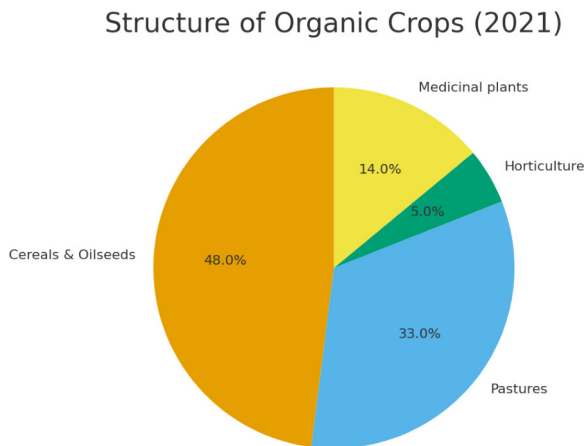


Figure 3 **Structure of Organic Crops**

Organic land use is dominated by cereals and pastures, which together represent over 80% of the certified area. horticulture and medicinal and aromatic plants (maps) are marginal but have high added value and export potential.

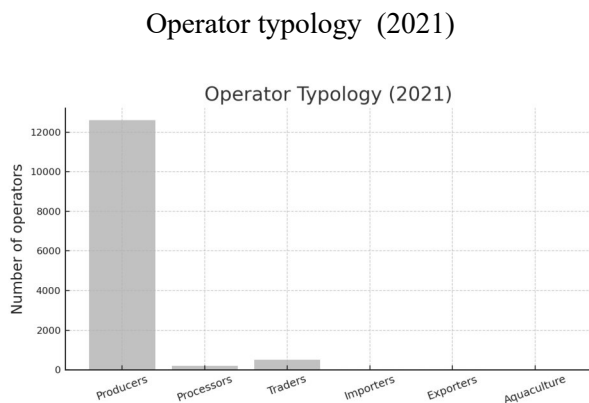


Figure 4 **Operator typology**

Processors account for less than 2% of operators, while traders, importers, and aquaculture producers are negligible. This imbalance demonstrates Romania's weak downstream capacity, limiting the development of a diversified domestic market.

#### Trade balance

Romania exports approximately four times more organic products than it imports, mostly bulk cereals and oilseeds. imports are limited but include higher value-added categories such as fruit and vegetables.

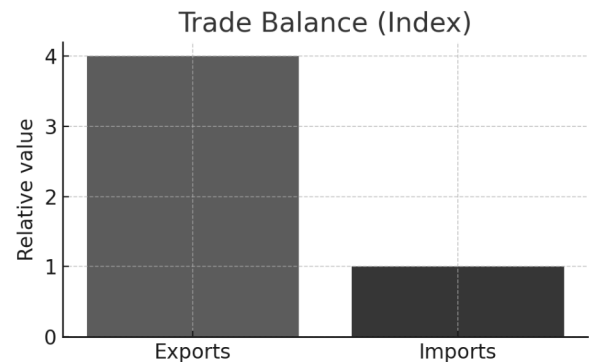


Figure 5 **Trade balance**

#### Domestic market

The Romanian organic retail market is valued at less than €100 million, well below the eu average (~€1.7 billion per country). this highlights the gap in consumer awareness and institutional demand.

European and Global context. In 2023, EU organic farmland reached 17.7 million ha. globally, FIBL and IFOAM (2025) reported ~99 million ha and €136.4 billion retail sales. Romania remains below the EU average but shows significant potential for expansion.

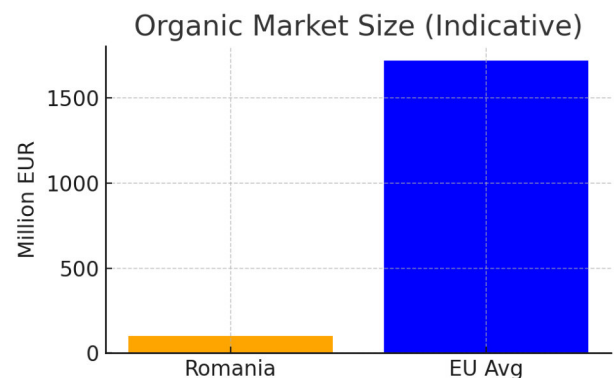


Figure 6 **Organic Market size Romania vs EU Avg**

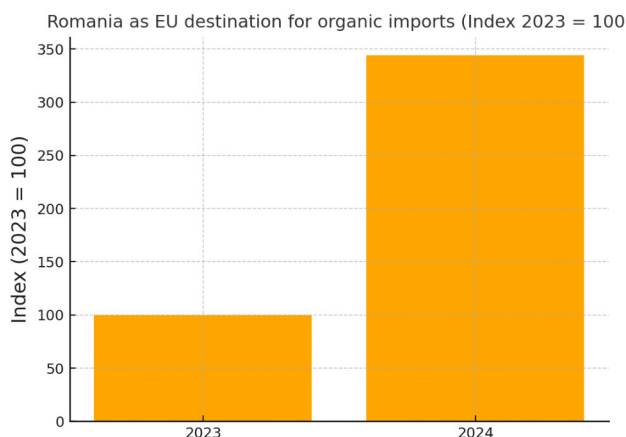


Figure 7 **Romania's organic import destination index: 2023 = 100 vs. 2024 = 344 (traces-based; ec analytical brief no. 7, 2025).**

#### TRACES-based insights (2024)

According to DG AGRI's analytical brief no. 7 (2025), based on traces data, Romania's role as a destination for EU organic imports increased sharply by +244% in 2024. The import index rose from 100 in 2023 to 344 in 2024, indicating strengthened trade dynamics and improved logistics.

Table 1  
**Key indicators of organic agriculture in Romania, 2022–2024.**

| Year  | Organic Farmland (ha) | Operators (count) | Share of uaa (%) | Imports (index 2023=100) |
|-------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| 2022  | 644,520               | 13,000            | 4.2              | –                        |
| 2023  | 693,000               | 14,000            | 4.5              | 100                      |
| 2024* | 710,000 (prov.)       | 14,100            | 4.6              | 344                      |

## CONCLUSIONS

Romania's organic farmland reached ~710,000 ha in 2024, with ~14,100 operators. Despite this growth, the sector faces structural bottlenecks: weak processing capacity, low domestic demand, and reliance on raw commodity exports. To align with EU Green Deal objectives, Romania must:

- (i) strengthen SME processing and logistics;
- (ii) retain operators after conversion;
- (iii) stimulate consumer demand through education and public procurement.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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