

Organic Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS) in Austria

Problem

Communication gaps, fragmented structures, and limited collaboration often prevent research results from reaching organic farmers effectively.

Solution

Interaction between research and farmers can be improved with EIP-AGRI operational groups, Living Labs, advisory networks, and digital knowledge platforms.

Applicability box

Theme

Environment and society

Keywords

Society

Context

Austria

Benefits

Knowledge transfer becomes more dynamic, and research results are accessible for practitioners.

Practical recommendations

Practical instruments and approaches of the Austrian AKIS strengthen knowledge exchange and innovation in organic farming and rural development. Austrian organic farmers can get involved in the below (Table 1) initiatives and take an active role in fostering collaboration between research and practice.

Table 1

Structure	Objectives
EIP-AGRI (European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability) and Operational Groups	
<p>In each call for projects, there is a special budget specifically for organic farming.</p> <p>It brings together farmers, researchers, advisors, and agribusinesses in so-called Operational Groups (OGs).</p>	<p>These groups work on practical, problem-oriented projects, addressing challenges such as soil health, climate adaptation, resource efficiency, or digitalisation.</p> <p>The goal is to co-create and test innovative solutions directly in practice.</p>
AKIS Coordination Office and Thematic Networks	
<p>Since 2023, the AKIS Coordination Office, hosted by Zukunftsraum Land in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture (BML) and the Chamber of Agriculture, has been working to enhance networking across sectors. There is a special map of the key actors of the Austrian organic AKIS.</p>	<p>Its mission is to connect research, advisory services, education, and practice more effectively.</p> <p>It develops “Communities of Practice”, where stakeholders collaborate and exchange knowledge on specific topics.</p>
Living Labs and Demonstration Farms	
<p>New methodological formats are gaining importance in Austria to bring science directly to the field.</p>	<p>Living Labs serve as open, real-life environments where farmers and researchers co-develop and test innovations together.</p> <p>Demonstration farms showcase practical applications of research results and new technologies to other farmers.</p>

Advisory Networks and Training for Researchers	
Another key strategy is to train both advisors and researchers to work more effectively across the research-practice boundary. Most of the projects in this context are specifically for organic farming.	Projects can strengthen advisors' innovation and communication skills, enabling them to act as "innovation brokers" between farmers and scientists. Universities and research institutions, such as BOKU Vienna and HBLFA Raumberg-Gumpenstein, offer training for researchers on participatory and transdisciplinary methods, helping them design projects that address real needs in farming practice.
Digital Platforms and Knowledge Management	
Digitalisation plays an increasingly central role in knowledge exchange	National platforms and portals (e.g., LFI online courses, AKIS web portal, Smart Farming platforms) make research results, learning materials, and best practices more accessible with specific categories for organic farming. Collaboration between the Austrian Chamber of Agriculture, BOKU, LFI, and AMA supports the creation of open-access knowledge systems.
New Communication Formats	
Communication is recognised as a crucial factor in bridging the gap between science and practice.	Innovation forums, speed-dating events like <u>"Quo vadis AKIS?"</u> and interactive workshops foster dialogue between researchers, advisors, and farmers. Podcasts, videos, and farmer-led publications share innovation stories and practical experiences in accessible ways.

Further information

Further reading

- [More about EIP Agri Projects in Austria](#)

Videos

- [EIP-AGRI inspirational video: AGRI challenge: soil fertility through carbon storage](#)
- Podcasts [Let's talk about Bio and Farming for Nature](#) focus on organic agriculture and agroecological practices.

Weblinks

- [modernAKIS](#)
- Demonstration farm projects: [modernAKIS](#), [Smart Rural 21](#), [ClimateFarmDemo](#).
- A good example for an organic demonstration farm in Austria is [Grand Farm](#).
- [Projekte - Netzwerk Zukunftsraum Land](#)
- [AKIS-Kooperationsstelle - Netzwerk Zukunftsraum Land](#)
- [Smart Farming: Vielzahl an Angeboten in Österreich | LFI Österreich](#)
- [i2connect - Home - i2connect](#)
- [Organic Advice Network](#)
- Check the [Organic Farm Knowledge platform](#) for more practical recommendations.

About this practice abstract and the OrganicTargets4EU project

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