

Nürnberg, Germany 14.-17.2.2023

# BIOFACH2023

into organic



## BIOFACH: Hanni Rützer column

### New glocal – the realignment of the global food trade

It's too early to predict the long-term effects worldwide of the loss of agricultural products from Ukraine, the "breadbasket of Europe", and massive increases in energy prices. But one thing is certain: The advocates of a resilient agri-food system are now getting more exposure. The long-established model of standardising food and animal feed and moving it around the entire world while exploiting economic, growth and inflation disparities – a system that not only tolerates massive greenhouse gas emissions but also subjects local producers to enormous cost and performance pressure – is starting to crumble. This will primarily benefit organic food producers that are not dependent on imported animal feed and fertilisers. And not least because this will reduce the cost gap between conventional and organic food.

The re-regionalisation of the food system is also in line with the preferences of many consumers, who even before the crises were arguing for more regional produce, transparent supply chains and origin labelling, and support for local producers. New glocal is therefore not just the answer to the huge upheaval in global supply chains. The desire for a new and more meaningful relationship between locally produced and globally imported food, a trend which has received fresh momentum due to the war, will evolve into an important guiding principle for the food industry of the future.

For more and more products, it is not primarily the price but regional availability that will be the key criterion for determining whether a food is imported or not. But even where the food trade continues to rely on international imports, the rules of the game will gradually change, because greater transparency along the entire supply chain also encourages more targeted cooperation with fair trade producers and/or farms that are committed to ecological and/or regenerative production methods. This will result in closer ties between various regions interested in forward-looking, more sustainable and longer-term collaborations.

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Step by step, this will also lead to a realignment of the range of regional food available in supermarkets, but also the expansion of international direct sales, for which the organic sector in particular offers many innovative role models.