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BIOFACH2019 **VIVANESS2019**
into organic into natural beauty



PRESS RELEASE

January 2019

BIOFACH and VIVANESS Congress 2019: Highlights of this year's knowledge transfer and networking event



- **In the spotlight: topics of practical interest on all aspects of organic foodstuffs and natural and organic cosmetics**
- **Key features: in-depth discussions, questions on the future of the market and future sector policy**
- **In focus: the main theme of the BIOFACH Congress, “The organic system – healthy in a holistic approach”**

The annual BIOFACH and VIVANESS Congress – part of the world's leading trade fair for organic food and the international trade fair for natural and organic personal care – is the sector's key knowledge transfer and networking event. The next in the series, scheduled for 13-16 February 2019, will once again welcome an expected 8,000 participants at more than 120 individual sessions. The main theme of the BIOFACH Congress this year is “The organic system – healthy in a holistic approach”. Mildred Steidle, Managing Director Organic Services and Congress Management on behalf of BIOFACH and VIVANESS, gives us her take on the highlights of the BIOFACH and VIVANESS Congress and the themes of current interest to the sector.

BIOFACH and VIVANESS: Mildred Steidle, what struck you as you were looking through the submissions after the “Call for Ideas” for the congress? What are the issues that matter most to the sector at the moment?

Mildred Steidle: The sector has impressively demonstrated that the main theme, “The organic system – healthy in a holistic approach”, is of current interest, and that it both raises questions and answers them. The “Call for Ideas” produced a number of fascinating contributions that impressively support the connection between organics and health in terms of an expanded health concept.

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The sector will discuss topics like biodiversity, soil fertility and soil health, and healthy foodstuff processing. It will also consider issues like nutritional styles, organic diets, and what form nutrition will take in the future.

Policy-makers will face questions on the first day of the trade fair, when the focus will turn to the potential of organic agriculture as a means of overcoming agricultural policy challenges, in the context of a recent scientific study (Wednesday, 13.02.2019, 15:00-15:45, NCC Ost, Hall Istanbul).



Thursday will see a discussion of the potential impact of organics on the costs associated with nutrition-based disease. Panel members will include BÖLW (the German Federation of the Organic Food Industry, national supporting organization of BIOFACH), which is responsible for arranging the key focal point of the congress together with IFOAM – Organics International (the international patron of BIOFACH), and representatives of health insurance companies and medical nutritionists, among others (14.02.2019, 12:00-13:30, NCC Ost, Hall Istanbul).

Then, between 12:00 and 13:30 on Friday, 15.02.2019, the focus will turn to nutritional education (NCC Ost, Hall Istanbul). Topics will include methods of communicating the connection between organics and fair trading as well as the role of nutritional education as a tool for implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Of course, these panels are just a few examples. A whole series of other sessions will be devoted to the main theme of the congress, which means a lot of fascinating information and lively discussions can be expected.

All of the sessions – whether on the main theme or the individual BIOFACH forums on sustainability, professional trade, policy, and science as well as the VIVANESS congress programme – can be easily viewed online at www.biofach.de/congress and www.vivaness.de/congress, giving interested parties a quick overview of the programme, the speakers, and the individual sessions.

BIOFACH and VIVANESS: Visitors can expect the familiar congress highlights, in which the latest market figures and statistics are announced and the resulting trends from these market research



findings are explained and explored. What else can visitors to the BIOFACH and VIVANESS Congress look forward to in particular?

Mildred Steidle: The “market research favourites” and the visitor magnets every year include “The World of Organic Agriculture.” This session, run by the international patron of BIOFACH, IFOAM – Organics International, will take place on Wednesday, 13.02.2019, from 16:00 to 16:45 in the Hall Shanghai. Another highlight of the **BIOFACH Congress** on Thursday (14.02.2019, 12:00-13:00, NCC Ost, Hall Shanghai) will be the presentation by Sebastian Buggert, of Cologne’s rheingold institute, who will look at the questions of how future consumers will view organic foodstuffs and the trends and developments that will characterise consumer behaviour and consumer expectations.

Market research and communications experts including Katya Witham (Mintel) and Hassaan Hakim (YOOL) will discuss how the organic sector should focus, or change its focus, on consumers in the future, and they’ll also look at methods of differentiation. This will also take place on Thursday, 14.02.2019, from 11:00 to 11:45, in the Hall Istanbul, and from 15:00 to 15:45 in NCC Ost in the Hall Shanghai.

The question of differentiation is also a topic in the natural and organic cosmetics scene at the **VIVANESS Congress**. The issues here are credibility, values, and how to distinctively position natural and organic cosmetics (Wednesday, 13.02.2019, 11:30-12:30, Hall 7A-731). Future prospects for the sector will be discussed by a panel that includes futurologist Dr Eike Wenzel of the Institut für Trend- und Zukunftsforschung (Institute for Trend and Future Research), on Thursday, 14.02.2019, 16:00-16:45, in Hall 7A-731.

Packaging is another topic of current interest, especially because the new German Packaging Act went into effect on 01.01.2019. The contribution “Plastic Planet? Packaging and recyclability in the organic market” looks at the prospects for sustainability in packaging. Where does the organic sector stand, and what’s the assessment of the materials currently being used? The trade association UnternehmensGrün has invited experts from the field of design, packaging manufacturers, and representatives of the organic trade (Friday, 15.02.2019, 14:00-15:30, NCC Ost, Room Kopenhagen). And in passing, packaging is also a topic for the VIVANESS Congress, which will



look at the question of “Why brand communication and design for recycling cannot be mutually exclusive, but can complement one another” (Thursday, 14.02.2019, 13:00-13:45, Hall 7A-731).

In this context, and for everyone who would like to experience packaging up close, packaging and materials expert Carolina Schweig will provide a wealth of examples during a walk around the BIOFACH novelty stand (Friday, 15.02.2019, 11:00-12:00, Hall 8-505).



BIOFACH and VIVANESS: Time is always tight, so if a visitor to the congress could attend only two sessions, what recommendations would you offer? For BIOFACH ...

Mildred Steidle: The sector has been concerned in recent years about a number of takeovers – Logona by L’Oreal, to name a recent example, and Pukka by Unilever in the organic foodstuffs sector. Ronald van Marlen has been occupied with the subject of “The Silent Take Over: Consolidated Organics Part 2,” and he will discuss the consequences and repercussions for the organic movement and offer recommendations for how the sector should deal with this trend (Wednesday, 13.02.2019, 16:00-16:45, NCC Ost, Room Oslo).

One subject that particularly affects me is “Microplastic in the soil, an issue or not for the organic sector?!” The pollution of the world’s seas by plastic is well known. But there is still very little discussion of the impact of microplastics in the soil on soil structure, organisms in the soil, and plant growth. Study results show that there are in fact negative repercussions (Thursday, 14.02.2019, 14:00-14:45, NCC Ost, Hall Shanghai).

... and VIVANESS?

Mildred Steidle: I’m especially looking forward to the presentation by Clare McDermott, of Soil Association Certification (UK). She’ll share a success story and explain how introducing an “Organic Beauty & Wellbeing Week” made it possible to reach consumers in a new way as well as stimulate the market (Thursday, 14.02.2019, 15:00-15:45, Hall 7A-731).

And on Wednesday, the first day of the trade fair, there will be a brainstorming session by European sector representatives on “Consumer expectations and market trends driving growth in organic and natural



cosmetics.” This discussion is guaranteed to stimulate plenty of lively discussion over the next three days at VIVANESS (Wednesday, 13.02.2019, 16:00-17:30, Hall 7A-731).

BIOFACH and VIVANESS: What are you personally looking forward to during the three days of the Congress?

Mildred Steidle: Discussions and opportunities to share views and experiences, and not only during the Congress events! After all, even if everyone has a full session schedule, there’s always an opportunity for private discussions and networking in between events.



Thank you for the interview.

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