

Check Organic at the 4th Organic Processing Conference in Seville, Spain (24-25 November 2016)

2 December 2016

A couple of weeks ago, we had the pleasure of attending and participating in the 4th Organic Processing Conference in Seville, organised by IFOAM EU and ecovalia in collaboration with the Spanish Ministerio de Agricultura y Pesca, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente, the Junta de Andalucía and the Ayuntamiento de Sevilla. With a strong turnout by attendees from Spain, the conference focused on organic's development in Spain, best practices in processing, but also on the current political situation surrounding the regulation of organic production. An important topic of the conference was on supply chain development, specifically on how to improve integrity and increase responsibility. This was a very interactive session with discussions on how to better know what is going on in your supply chain – what steps can you take and what tools are available to help you do this? With examples of Bionext's efforts in the Netherlands, together with its members, to develop their own set of tools to improve integrity and an example of what one company is doing to be involved with its suppliers on a more personal level, the session showed us how integrity should be viewed from a holistic perspective of having the right set of tools in combination with strong relationships to suppliers.



*Check Organic at the conference.
Photo by Organic Services.*

On the second day of the conference, supply chain integrity was again featured and demonstrated by the FederBio Integrity Platform. Roberto Pinton, the Secretary-General of Assobio, presented the reasons why the FederBio Integrity Platform (FIP) came into existence and why it was necessary. The organic grain scandals that impacted the Italian organic sector through the sale of conventional goods as certified organic left the sector with little choice but to take action to stop the likelihood of another scandal. With the backing of the retail sector, this multi-stakeholder initiative to implement a nationwide volume monitoring system based on mass balance has achieved success and participation has been made mandatory by Accredia, the Italian accreditation body and approved by the Italian government. In helping to implement FIP, Organic Services' Gerald A. Herrmann presented the FIP system in action through a recorded video of its features. FIP is a major



Roberto Pinton of Assobio explaining the FederBio Integrity Platform. Photo by Organic Services.

achievement for the organic sector. As in Check Organic, there is a two-level approach to integrity,



Gerald A. Herrmann of Organic Services demonstrating the FederBio Integrity Platform. Photo by Organic Services.

both at the certification and the supply chain level, meaning that organic certification data is connected to supply chain data. FederBio's partnership with Check Organic means that Check Organic users can also harness the power of this system too.

The conference provided for a great exchange of dialogue among the participants and a discussion of the achievements to date and the challenges that lie ahead for the organic (processing) sector.