

Organic Eprints – A European Communication Tool for Organic Farming Research

H. Willer

¹ *Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL, CH-5070 Frick, E-mail [helga.willer \[AT\] fibl.org](mailto:helga.willer@fibl.org)*

ABSTRACT: A major initiative to improve information exchange on organic farming research is the international database Organic Eprints. Organic Eprints is an international electronic open access archive for papers related to research in organic agriculture. The German Federal Organic Farming Scheme BOEL, the Danish Research Centre for Organic Agriculture DARCOF, and the Swiss FiBL have all committed themselves to document all their publications via this database and thus make it accessible to a wide public – an example which should be followed by other countries.

KEY WORDS *Research Communication, research structures, internet, publication database*

INTRODUCTION: The international database Organic Eprints is an open access archive for papers related to research in organic agriculture. The archive contains full-text papers in electronic form together with bibliographic information, abstracts and other metadata. The database is available at www.orgprints.org, and was set up by the Danish Research Centre of Organic Farming DARCOF. The Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL (Germany and Switzerland) is a major partner and now further develops the database as part of a project under the German Federal Organic Farming Scheme BOEL.

CURRENT STATUS & SOME ACHIEVEMENTS: Currently the database has 1200 entries. Most of these are in the field of organic plant production (36%), followed by soil and nature (15%), and then animal husbandry (10%).

Recently the first results of the BOEL research projects were released (total 180 research projects), covering a wide range of subjects including many related to organic animal husbandry (total 30 projects). The studies related to organic animal husbandry that have been released up to now deal with marketing problems of organic pig and cattle production as well as animal breeding in organic farming. The main findings of the first two studies are that the development of the organic meat market is hindered by a lack of communication both within the sector as well as with the consumers. The study on organic animal breeding defined criteria and breeding aims for animals suited to the organic system (e.g. better resistance to diseases, optimum adaptation to organic feeding systems).

The German version of Organic Eprints is integrated into the state-funded German internet portal on organic agriculture (www.oekolandbau.de), and the results are not only available in their full text version to experts but also in an easily accessible form. The connection of the Organic Eprints database with the internet portal is therefore a major step towards making research results known to a wide interested public.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: With the existing partners in the archive Organic Eprints has already developed into the information resource on research related to organic agriculture. It is gaining particularly high importance because both Denmark (DARCOF) and Germany (BOEL) have obliged themselves to put all the output of their national organic farming research programmes into that database. With FiBL - the Swiss competence centre on all matters related to organic farming – as a third partner the database has high competence behind it. It is important now that the database gains a true European dimension and that as many institutions as possible use it to document some if not all of their output.

CONTACT ORGANIC EPRINTS DATABASE WWW.ORGPRINTS.ORG

- Dr. Hugo Fjelsted Alroe (Administrator of the Database), Organic Eprints Database, c/o Danish Research Centre for Organic Farming (DARCOF), P.O. Box 50, Foulum, DK-8830 Tjele, Tel. 0045 89 99 16 75, Fax 0045-89-99 12 00, E-Mail [orgprints \[AT\] agrsci.dk](mailto:orgprints@agrsci.dk), Homepage <http://www.foejo.dk>

- Dr. Helga Willer (Coordination of the entries from the German Speaking Countries), Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL, Ackerstrasse, CH-5070 Frick, Tel. +41 62 86572-72, Fax +41 62 8657273, E-Mail helga.willer [AT] fibl.org, Homepage <http://www.fibl.org>, and <http://forschung.oekolandbau.de>