

## Organic Farming in Turkey and the Contribution of Buğday to the Sector's Development

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In Turkey, documented organic farming began during 1984-1985 with the traditional export products of dried raisins and figs. In about a decade, the variety of organic export items had reached approximately 250. Today, almost all of the production is exported to developed countries, mainly EU, the US and Japan. Most of the organic production is geared towards exports. In most cases, traders commission the farmers to produce a specific product.

Although there are no statistics available for the domestic consumption of organic products in Turkey, we know that it is relatively low. The main challenge is the lack of demand and marketing opportunities. This is where Buğday Association comes in.

### Buğday's Contribution to the development of the organic sector in Turkey

Buğday is a grassroots movement, and it has been operating officially since 2002 under the name of "Buğday Association for Supporting Ecological Living." The Buğday magazine was the first publication of ecological living in Turkey and was also the first publication to talk about what "organic" is. The magazine was followed by a big PR move initiated by the PR professionals in the Bugday team, providing solid information to the national Turkish media by combining traditional knowledge and information from renowned organic organizations, such as the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM).

In 2006, Bugday founded the first organic farmers' market of Turkey in Şişli, one of the districts of Istanbul together with the local municipality. The first organic farmers' market allowed the organic producers to sell their products directly to consumers. Before the market in Şişli was established, many of them had to sell their produce at the conventional markets, which was not sustainable. Today, there are several organic farmers' markets in Turkey, five of them founded and supervised by Buğday. However, the Şişli organic farmers' market remains the role model and the heart of the organic movement.

**Table 62: Turkey: Sales volumes of fresh products on the Şişli farmers' market**

Year (always month of June)	Sales volume the first week of June
June 2006	3 metric tons
June 2007	4-5 metric tons
June 2008	6-8 metric tons
June 2009	9-11 metric tons
June 2010	12-15 metric tons
June 2011	12-16 metric tons

Source: Buğday

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The Şişli farmers' market opened in June 2006 with 25 suppliers and 48 stalls. Today, there are 60 suppliers at 260 stalls. Since 2010, approximately 600 tons of fresh fruits and vegetables are sold every year on the Şişli farmers' market. The market is visited by about 1 500 visitors every Saturday.

**Table 63: Turkey: Şişli farmers' market: Suppliers' profile 2010**

Supplier type	Number
<b>Total number of suppliers'</b>	59
<b>Food, import, packaged brand suppliers</b>	9
<b>Producers</b>	37
<b>Traders</b>	13

Source: Buğday

It is of significance that the farmers' market retains its place mainly as a "producers' market" as opposed to a traders' market. We value that the consumers buy directly from the producers themselves.

Today, the farmers' markets that are founded by Buğday host a variety of organic certified products, ranging from fresh produce to packaged foods, textiles, cosmetics, cleaning supplies etc. They are closely inspected and supervised by Buğday's team of agricultural engineers. The farmers' markets host concerts, workshops, seminars and ecological movie screenings continuously, thus creating an ecological haven for city dwellers.

### History of the Buğday movement

- 1990: First market and research on whole some food in Bodrum, Turkey,
- 199: Health food store opens as the base and meeting point for the organic movement in Bodrum,
- 1992: The store is transformed into a restaurant and an education center which serves as a national and international meeting point and base for the next eight years.
- 1998: First bi-monthly Buğday Ecological Living Magazine is published and distributed in the country.
- 1999: First congress on "Healthy domestic organic market" organized.
- 2000: Different models for the marketing of organic products are established.
- 2002: Buğday Association is legally established as the umbrella organization for the movement.
- 2003: TaTuTa organic farm holidays and volunteer program established.
- 2005: First community supported organic city garden project carried out.
- 2006: First 100% ecological farmers' market was established in İstanbul, Turkey.
- 2007: Project for the preparation of an agri-environment programme for Turkey starts, funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.
- 2008: Turkey's seed network founded.
- 2009: Camtepe rural research and education center successfully completed (opened in 2010).
- 2010: First international permanent representation established in Brussels

- 2011: The founder of Buğday Association, Victor Ananias, passed away. Buğday was shaken, but did not stir from its path. At the 17<sup>th</sup> Organic World Congress of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) in the Republic Korea, it was decided that Buğday carries out the 18<sup>th</sup> Organic Word Congress.<sup>1</sup> The congress will take place in October 2014 in Istanbul.

### Tables and graphs

In 2010, Turkey had almost 400'00 hectares or one percent of its agricultural land under organic agricultural management (including conversion areas). The number of producers has reached almost 45'000. A large part of production is dedicated to arable land, with cereals constituting the main crop category. Permanent crops play also a prominent role, with olives being the main group. Of the organic land under organic management about one fifth is fully converted. The big increase in the number of organic farms and of organic land is a result of a support programme aimed to increase organic production. It was implemented by the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture. The monetary support that was distributed to the farmers was, however, area-based and not production/output-based. Therefore, vast areas were converted to organic production but this production was not for the market.

Even though the organic area has grown substantially since 2009, exports dropped dramatically in 2010, mainly because of the lack of marketing strategies and the insufficient development of export products. Because of the instability of the organic produce supply, some overseas buyers moved on to other markets.

**Table 64: Turkey's organic export figures**

Year	Amount (Kilograms)	Value (US dollars)
1998	8'616'687	19'370'599
1999	12'049'949	24'563'892
2000	13'128'934	22'756'297
2001	17'556'280	27'242'407
2002	19'182'859	30'877'140
2003	21'083'351	36'932'995
2004	16'093'189	33'076'319
2005	9'319'328	26'230'259
2006	10'374'493	28'236'617
2007	9'346'677	29'359'321
2008	8'628'790	27'260'473
2009	7'565'604	27'504'928
2010	3'592'925	15'879'571

Source: Ministry of Food Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

<sup>1</sup> The bidding proposal is available at the IFOAM website  
[http://www.ifoam.org/events/ifoam\\_conferences/general\\_assembly/IFOAMBidDocument\\_Bugday.pdf](http://www.ifoam.org/events/ifoam_conferences/general_assembly/IFOAMBidDocument_Bugday.pdf)

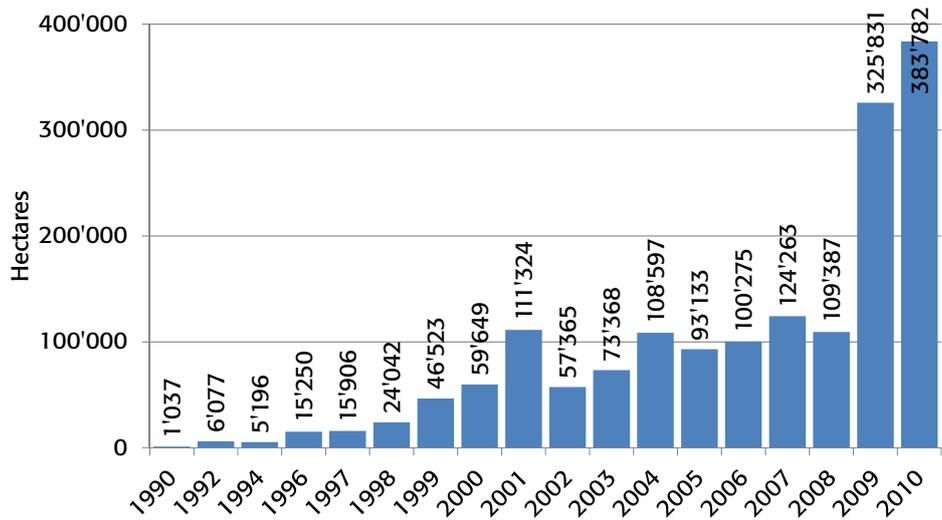


Figure 66: Turkey: Development of the organic agricultural land 1990-2010 (includes in-conversion areas)

Source: Ministry of Food Agriculture and Animal Husbandry for data from 2002, FiBL-SÖL Surveys for data before 2002

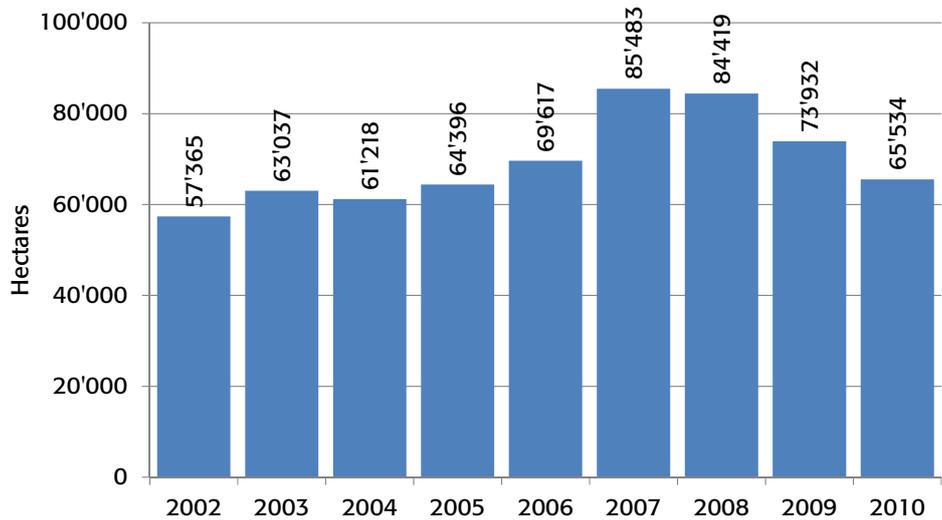


Figure 67: Turkey: Development of the fully converted organic agricultural land 1990-2010

Source: Ministry of Food Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

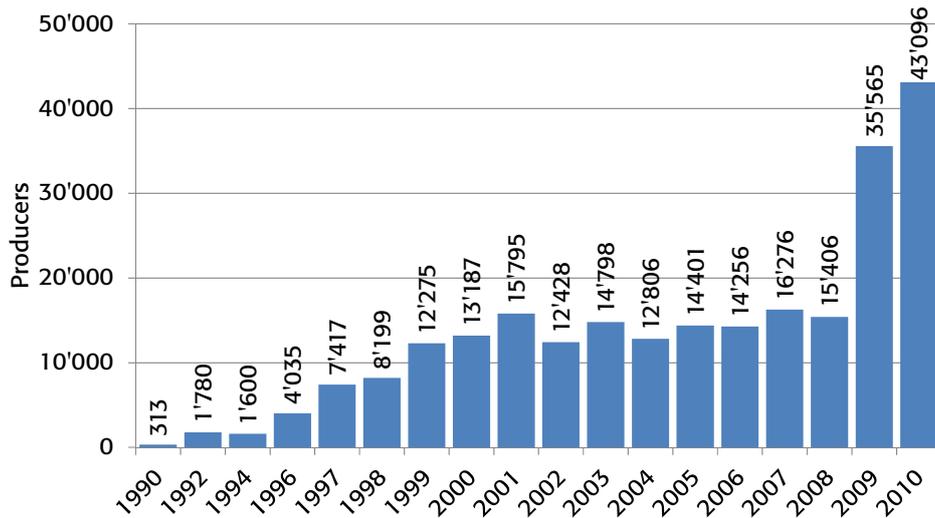
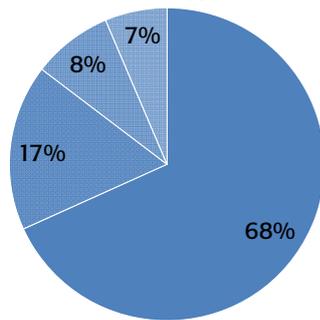


Figure 68: Turkey: Development of the organic producers 1990-2010

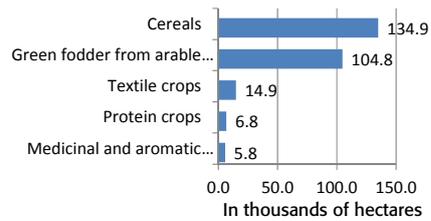
Source: Ministry of Food Agriculture and Animal Husbandry for data from 2002, FiBL-SÖL Surveys for data before 2002

Main land use types 2010



- Arable crops
- Permanent crops
- Permanent grazing
- Other agricultural land

Key arable crops



Key permanent crops

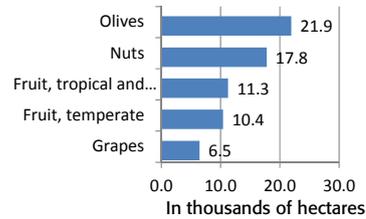


Figure 69: Turkey: Land use and main crops 2010 (including in-conversion areas).

Source: Ministry of Food Agriculture and Animal Husbandry