

**EU CODE OF CONDUCT ON
RESPONSIBLE FOOD BUSINESS AND MARKETING PRACTICES**

Annual report
2023

General information

Name in full + acronym	Assoziation ökologischer Lebensmittelhersteller e.V. (AöL)
Contact person with contact details	Pia Kissinger (born Uthe) pia.uthe@aoel.org
N° in the transparency register*	715596039328-75
Date of signature of the Code	01.09.2021
Step of the food chain represented (ex: primary production, production, processing, trade, retail, ...)	Organic food processing
Who do you represent? (e.g. number of members, companies, SMEs)	130 companies in german speaking countries

The Association of Organic Food Processors e.V. (AöL) represents the interests of the organic oriented food processing industry in German-speaking Europe. The AöL's tasks include the political representation of interests and the promotion of exchange and co-operation among its members.

The objectives of the EU CODE OF CONDUCT ON RESPONSIBLE FOOD BUSINESS AND MARKETING PRACTICES are among the core topics of AöL's sustainability work. AöL's work on these core topics takes the form of the following strategies: Provision of knowledge, networking between member companies in order to exchange knowledge and political work.

The new regulatory developments in the area of sustainability at EU level increased the need for AöL members to work on these issues.



Activities connected to the aspirational objectives and targets of the Code in 2023

The activity of the AöL's Sustainability Working Group has increased significantly for these regulatory developments. The implementation of sustainability measures both at management level and along the process and supply chain was a particular focus here.

Three working groups were set up as part of the Sustainability Working Group (Working Group 1 on the topic of "Net Zero", Working Group 2 on the topic of "supply chain legislation (EU and Germany)" and Working Group 3 on the topic of "sustainability reporting").

The **Net Zero working group** deals with the setting and implementation of climate targets in companies. The Science Based Target Initiative and thus also the FLAG standard play a major role here. External consultants (e.g. Climate Partner) and experiences companies are invited to explain the content of the standards and to discuss and support the practical implementation. The working group also discusses the accounting of Scope 1, 2 and 3 and which tools could be of help to companies for this. Overall, experience reports on measures towards net zero are regularly exchanged and topics such as e-mobility, energy generation and waste heat utilisation are discussed.

With this working group, the AöL is contributing to objective 1.2 (Reducing the environmental footprint of food consumption by 2030) and goal 3 (A climate-neutral food chain in Europe by 2050) of the EU Code of Conduct.

The **working group on supply chain** work and supply chain legislation deals with the implementation of current German and future European supply chain legislation (CSDDD and LkSG). Here, companies exchange views on how a risk analysis can be successfully implemented, how to implement a Code of Conduct successfully, how a complaint mechanism can be introduced and which preventive and remedial measures are possible to improve standards along the supply chain.

With this working group, the AöL is contributing to objective 7 (Sustainable sourcing in food supply chains) of the EU Code of Conduct.

The **working group on sustainability reporting** deals with the new European sustainability reporting requirements. Where requirements are still being consulted, statements are being prepared. In the case of the requirements that have already come into force, the main focus is on understanding the requirements and handling the large volume of these requirements. The focus here is on exchanging experiences. However, external consultants will also be invited to provide support and various tools will be looked at to support the systematic approach, data collection and reporting. Possible tools were also discussed in the AöL's online format "LeMiMo" for all members.

In addition to the topic of sustainability tools, there was also a LeMiMo on the topic of food waste, which alternated between the provision of information and discussions. One point among others with which AöL contributes to objective 2 (Prevention and reduction of food loss and waste) of the EU Code of Conduct.



At the meeting of the Sustainability Working Group in October, the members drew up a plan of objectives and measures for the topics prioritised by the working group: Biodiversity, circular economy, water, gender equality and digitalisation / AI). By implementing the measures, AöL contributes to objective 4 (An optimised circular and resource-efficient food chain in Europe) and objective 5 (Lasting, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all) of the EU Code of Conduct.

AöL is a supporting member of the Food for Biodiversity association and is involved in dialogue on the topic of biodiversity with other organic and conventional food processing companies and the food trade. The aim is to pull together across all sectors, exchange knowledge and share experiences.

At the AöL members' meeting in spring 2023, an open space was organised on the topic of "Implementing sustainability profitably in the company and ensuring differentiation". Members had the opportunity to exchange ideas and gain new inspiration.

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Encouraging our members to also promote their activities

The AöL supports its members in their communication of sustainable activities. On the one hand, the AöL supports companies in the preparation of sustainability reports that comply with the law as part of the sustainability reporting working group. On the other hand, the AöL has set up a **"Communication" working group**. Here, the AöL provides templates to give members a platform to communicate their organic and sustainability activities quickly and easily. The LinkedIn channel is currently frequently used for this purpose.

Association of Organic Food Processors e.V.

The Association of Organic Food Processors e.V. (AöL) represents the interests of the organic oriented food processing industry in German-speaking Europe. The AöL's tasks include the political representation of interests and the promotion of exchange and cooperation among its members. The nearly 130 AöL companies, ranging from small and medium-sized enterprises to internationally active companies, generate a turnover of more than 4 billion euros with organic food. The AöL is a discussion partner for politics, business, science and the media in all matters of organic food processing.

Assoziation ökologischer Lebensmittelhersteller e.V. | Untere Badersgasse 8
97769 Bad Brückenau | Tel: +49 (0) 9741 93332 0 | pia.uthe@aoel.org | www.aoel.org

