

# Organic aquaculture in the EU



## What is organic aquaculture?

Organic aquaculture is a system of farming and food production that is based on the organic objectives and principles set out in **Regulation (EU) 2018/848**.

### Objectives and principles\*

Organic production pursues **general objectives**, such as:

- Contributing to environment and climate protection.
- Contributing to high level of biodiversity.
- Substantially contributing to non-toxic environment.
- Contributing to high animal welfare standards.
- Encouraging short distribution channels and local production.
- Encouraging preservation of rare and endangered native breeds.

Organic aquaculture is based on a number of **principles**. Those relevant for aquaculture are the following:

- Limiting the use of non-renewable resources and external inputs to a minimum.
- Ensuring the continuing health of the aquatic environment and the quality of surrounding aquatic ecosystems.
- Feeding aquatic organisms with feed from sustainably exploited fisheries or with organic feed composed of agricultural ingredients resulting from organic production, and of natural non-agricultural substances.
- Avoiding endangering species of conservation interest.

\* Source: Regulation (EU) 2018/848 on organic production and labelling of organic products

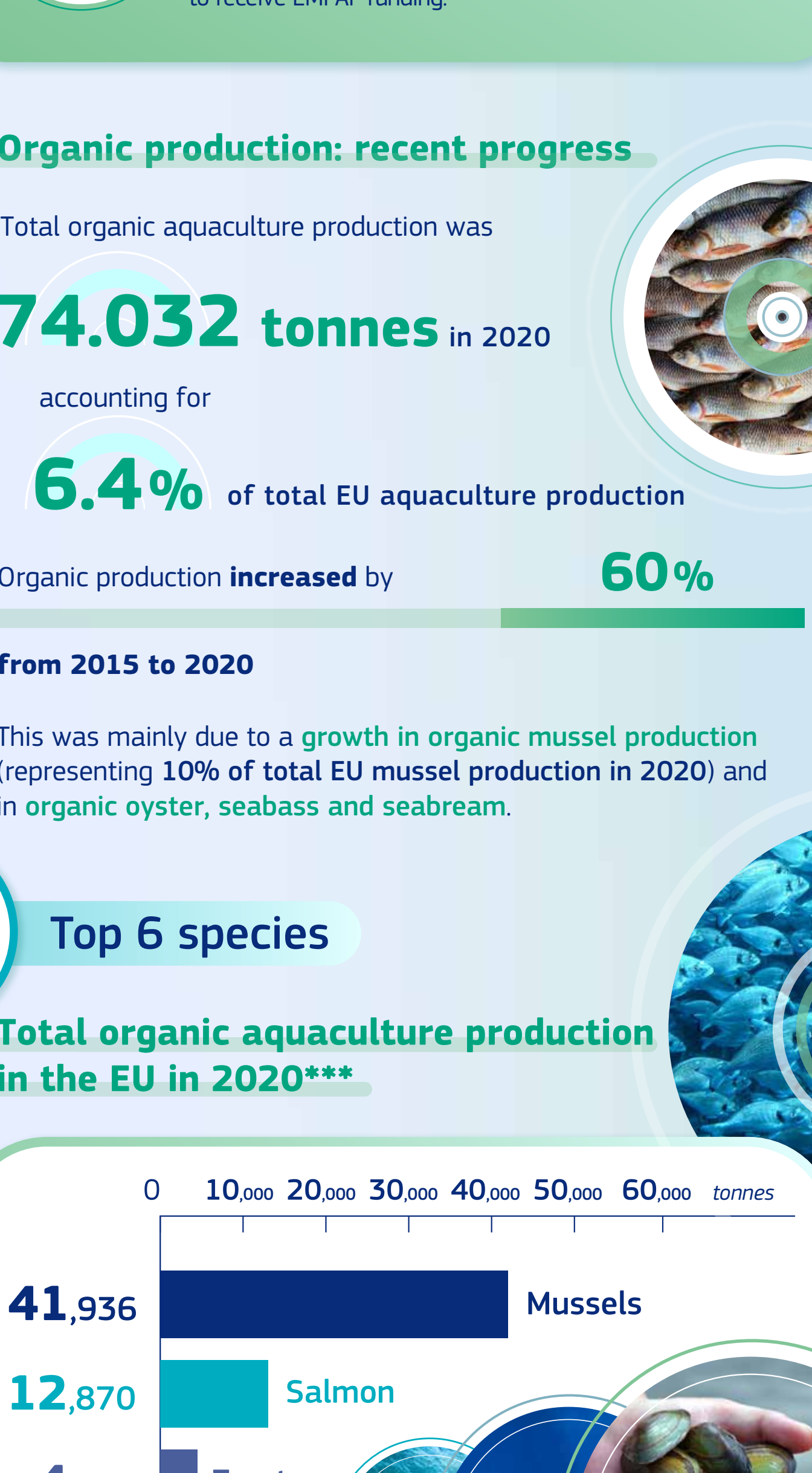
### Establishing sound rules\*\*

The EU has established a **regulatory scheme** for the production, marketing and control of organic products, including organic aquaculture. Organic algae and aquaculture producers who decide to **label and certify** their products with the **EU organic logo** must comply with detailed **EU production rules** set per species or per group of species.

Such rules are based on the above-mentioned objectives and principles. They include, among others, respecting maximum stocking densities, not using any hormones or hormone derivatives, preventing disease and limiting use of veterinary treatments.

Only when products are made in compliance with these strict EU rules can they be covered by the **EU logo** and **certification scheme**.

### Aquatic species covered in the EU Organic Regulation



\*\* Source: Regulation (EU) 2018/848 on organic production and labelling of organic products and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/464

## Growth of EU organic aquaculture\*\*\*

The EU has taken a number of initiatives to help the organic aquaculture sector in Europe reach its full potential.

The **Farm to Fork Strategy** set a target to significantly increase organic aquaculture by 2030.

The **EU Action plan** on organic farming identified several actions to boost organic production in the EU.

The **Strategic guidelines for sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030** promote organic aquaculture.

The **European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)** provides financial support for inclusion to organic aquaculture. EU Member States have convened measures to develop organic aquaculture in their **Multi-annual national strategic plans for aquaculture** and in their programmes to receive EMFAF funding.

### Organic production: recent progress

Total organic aquaculture production was

**74.032 tonnes** in 2020

accounting for

**6.4%** of total EU aquaculture production

Organic production **increased by 60%**

from 2015 to 2020

This was mainly due to a **growth in organic mussel production** (representing 10% of total EU mussel production in 2020) and in **organic oyster, seabass and seabream**.

### Top 6 species

#### Total organic aquaculture production in the EU in 2020\*\*\*



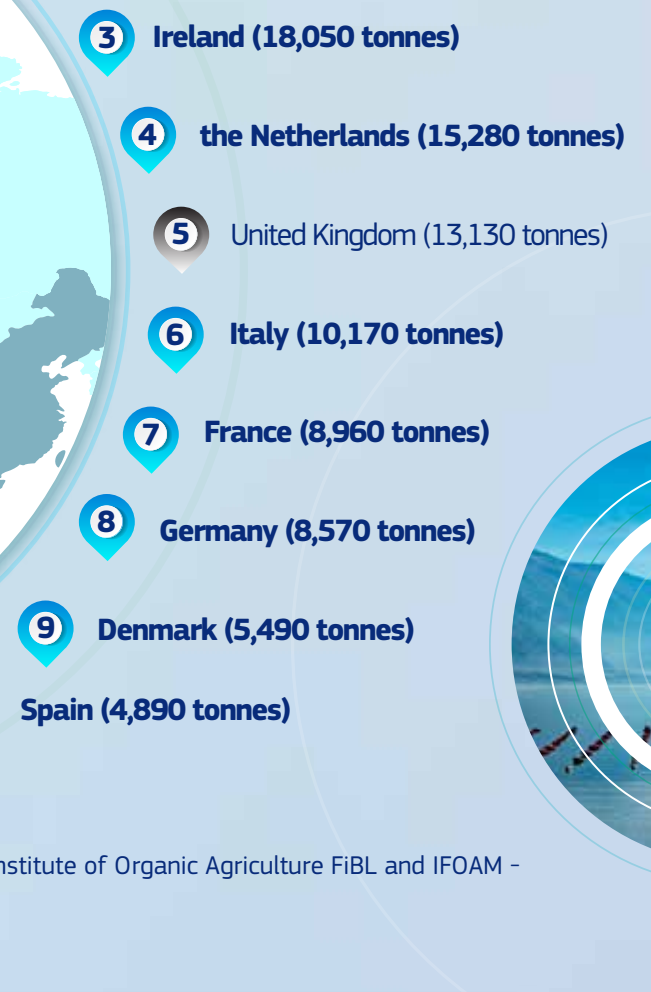
### EU producers of organic aquaculture\*\*\*

Country	2020 Production Volume (in tonnes)	Main Species
Ireland	18,000	caged salmon, rope mussel and bottom mussel
Italy	9,600	mussel, Japanese carpet shell, rainbow trout, European seabass, gilthead seabream, oyster and shrimp
France	9,000	oyster, mussel, trout, European seabass/gilthead seabream, pond fish, other shellfish and trout eggs
Netherlands	8,000	mussel, oyster
Spain	7,500	mussel, sturgeon, trout, seaweed, European seabass and gilthead seabream
Germany	6,700	mussel, trout and carp
Denmark	5,500	mussel, trout and algae
Bulgaria	3,000	mussel and algae
Hungary	1,700	Chinese carp, common carp and predatory fish
Greece	1,600	European seabass and gilthead seabream
Romania	800	carp, barbels, cyprinids and rainbow trout
Slovenia	700	mussel and finfish
Lithuania	600	carp
Poland	300	carp, barbels and cyprinids
Croatia	300	gilthead seabream, European seabass and mussel
Austria	200	carp, rainbow trout and sea trout
Belgium	11	trout
Latvia	8	no details available

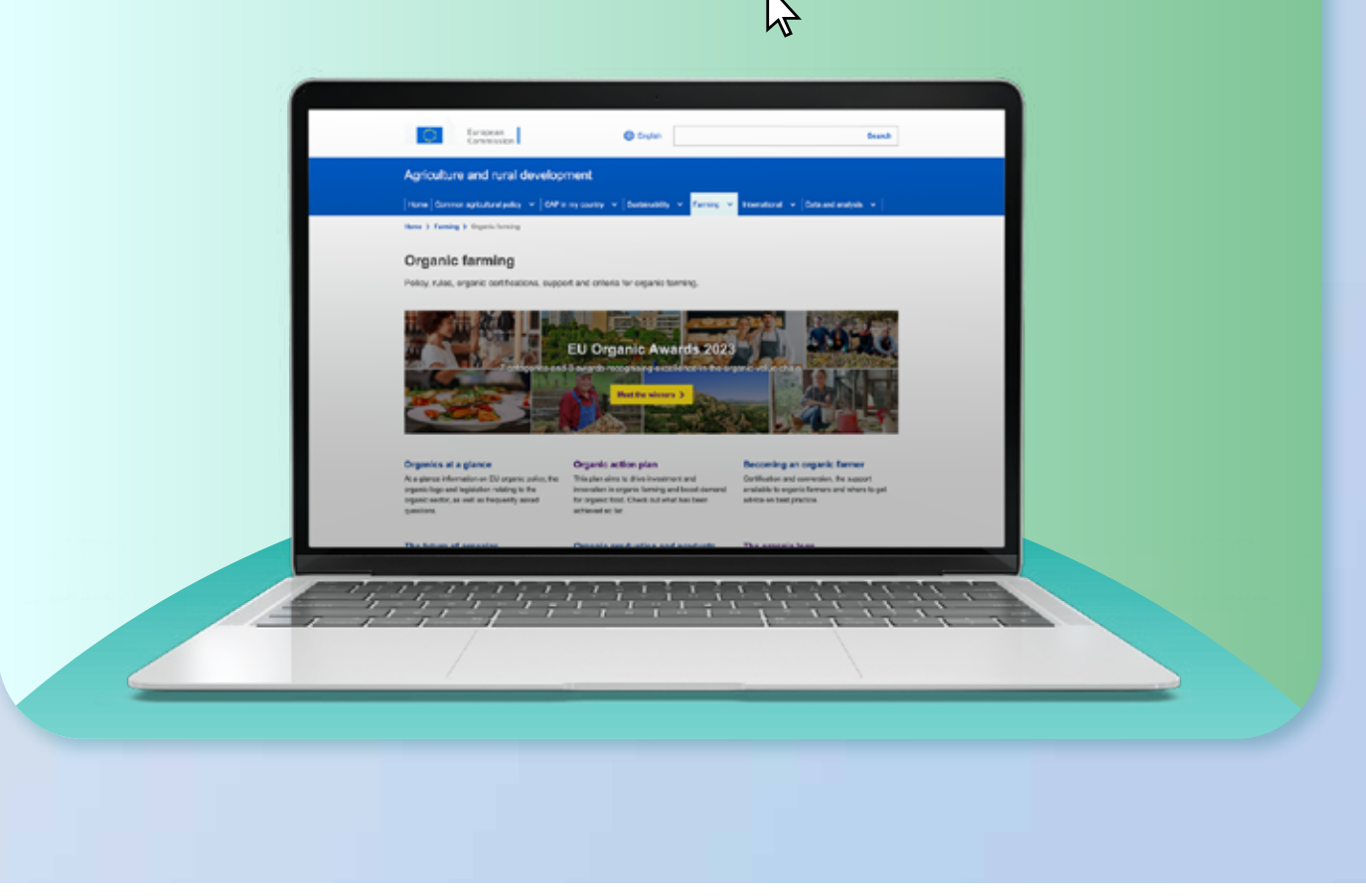
\*\*\* Source: Organic aquaculture in the EU, EUMOFA - European Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture Products

### Global standing\*\*\*\*

In 2021, the EU was the world's **second largest organic aquaculture producer**, accounting for **12%** of total production volume of organic aquaculture (China 82%).



### Top 10 countries (total organic aquaculture production volume in the world in 2021)



\*\*\*\* Source: The World of Organic Agriculture 2023, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL and IFOAM - Organics International

### Want to know more about the EU organic certification scheme?

Visit the EU organic website [here](#)

