



## WHAT IS CERTCOST?

A European research project on certification of organic food. The project is supported by the European Commission and runs from 2008-2011.

### **A maze of competing labels and logos**

With the ongoing growth of the organic sector and the spread of organic production across the EU, the field of organic certification has become a maze of competing labels and logos, involving different private and public standards - in addition to European law. This diversity reflects the specific conditions for organic operators in countries or regions but can also lead to confusion for both consumers and producers and may ultimately create a variety of costs.

### **Purpose of CERTCOST**

The overall objective of the project is to provide recommendations to improve the organic food certification systems in Europe in terms of efficiency, transparency, and cost effectiveness. The reason for this is the need for a strengthened competitiveness of the European organic food sector through the reduction of the incidence of non-compliance and thus increasing consumers' trust.

In other words, the project partners will generate research based knowledge on how to improve the organic food certification system in terms of efficiency, transparency and cost effectiveness.

### **Activities**

The CERTCOST project will conduct a necessary comprehensive economic analysis of the variety of existing certification systems and their impact on the internal market for organic goods. By combining the experience and knowledge of both researchers and small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), the project seeks to fulfil the following objectives

### **Key word content of CERTCOST**

1. To provide baseline information on the organic certification systems.
2. To analyze the implementation of organic certification systems and to assess all relevant expenditure and transaction costs.
3. To investigate the main benefits of certification systems for consumers.
4. To develop and apply economic models that improve risk-based certification systems and allow costs of certification systems to be related to the benefits gained.
5. To develop recommendations from the research for different groups of stakeholders.
6. To include stakeholders' views into the project work and to share the project results with them and the public.

### **Financial support to CERTCOST**

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