



Organic Knowledge Network on Monogastric Animal Feed OK-Net EcoFeed

Press release for the final conference

Deliverable number	<i>D.1.12</i>
Dissemination level	Public
Delivery date	<i>28/02/2021</i>
Status	
Lead beneficiary	<i>IFOAM Organics Europe</i>
Author(s)	<i>Ambra De Simone, Bram Moeskops</i>



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 773911. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.

Document Versions

Version	Date	Contributor	Summary of Changes
0.1	16/02/2021	Ambra De Simone	First draft
0.2	26/02/2021	Bram Moeskops	Revision
1.0	08/03/2021	Ambra De Simone	Final Version

This deliverable contains original unpublished work except where clearly indicated otherwise. Acknowledgement of previously published material and of the work of others has been made through appropriate citation, quotation or both.

Executive summary

This deliverable is part of the Horizon 2020 project - OK-Net EcoFeed, Work Package 1 – Project management and promotion, led by IFOAM EU.

The overall aim of OK-Net EcoFeed (Organic Knowledge Network on Monogastric Animal Feed) is to help farmers, breeders and the organic feed processing industry in achieving the goal of 100% use of organic and regional feed for monogastrics, in particular pigs, broilers, laying hens and parents of broilers and laying hens.

This present deliverable D1.12 “Press release of the final conference”, reports on the final conference (MS1.2) which took place on the 25th & 26th of January 2021 (M37), online. Organized by IFOAM Organics Europe and supported by the OK-Net EcoFeed Steering Committee, the conference “Improving sustainability and welfare in organic poultry and pig production” was a joint event with three other projects: The Horizon 2020 project PPILOW, and the projects FreeBirds and POWER funded by ERA-Net CORE Organic. About 200 attendees took part in the discussion. Furthermore, farmers’ experiences were presented, and the next steps in the development of the Organic Farm Knowledge Platform were discussed. The conference also hosted the panel discussion: “Policy and society perspectives on organic pig and poultry production”. The press release “Solutions for sustainable feeding and animal welfare in organic farming – Research projects contribute” was shared with the EIP-AGRI services and published on the [OK-Net EcoFeed](#) and [IFOAM newsletter](#). The press release aimed to increase visibility of the project in the EIP-AGRI network as well as the European Commission. It provided information of the OK-Net EcoFeed outcomes, and the statements from the projects’ coordinators involved in the conference. The full press release can be found in chapter II.1.

Table of Contents

Document Versions	2
I. Introduction.....	4
I.1.....	4
II. Projects involved in the OK-Net EcoFeed final conference.....	5
II.1 PRESS RELEASE: Solutions for sustainable feeding and animal welfare in organic farming – Research projects contribute.....	6
III. Results: Outreach and impact of the event.....	7
III.1 Dissemination prior to the event	7
III.1.1 Live Tweeting.....	7
III.2 Impacts of the event.....	8
IV. Conclusions.....	8

I. Introduction

The OK-Net EcoFeed project proposal description states that “a final conference (MS1.2) will be organized in M34-35 in Brussels by IFOAM EU, supported by the Steering Committee, to present project outcomes, exchange experiences and discuss next steps in the development of the OK-Net Knowledge Platform.” Due to the current covid-19 containment measures the physical event was replaced by a 2-day online conference which took place on the 25th and 26th of January 2021 (M37). The conference, entitled “Improving sustainability in organic poultry and pig production”, was a joint effort of 4 projects: [OK-Net EcoFeed](#), [PPILOW](#), [FreeBirds](#) and [POWER](#). It attracted about 200 attendees including researchers, students, farmers, advisers, policy makers and European Commission representatives with interests in organic farming. The agenda of the conference is presented below:

I.1

Table 1: agenda of the conference “Improving sustainability in organic poultry and pig production”

Day 1 - 25 January 2021 - Register here		
Time	Topic	Speaker
9.15-9.30	Getting started	
9.30-9.45	Welcome by the project coordinators	Bram Moeskops (OK-Net EcoFeed) Anne Collin (PPILOW) Stefan Gunnarsson (FreeBirds) Anne Grete Kongsted (POWER)
	Theme: Animal welfare I	
9.45-10.15	One Welfare for farm animals and humans: practitioners' and citizens' expectations	Anne Collin (INRAE) Jarkko Niemi (LUKE)
10.15-10.30	A tool for farmers to self-assess the welfare of their livestock	Frank Tuytens (ILVO)
10.30-10.45	Farmer experience: Dual purpose breeds	Boris Saenger Interviewed by ITAB
10.45-11.15	Networking coffee break	
	Theme: Sustainable feeding	
11.15-11.30	Farmers experience: Effect of lactic acid bacteria as supplement (Video)	Sanna Steinfeldt (AU)
11.30-11.50	Sustainable and regional feeding for pigs and poultry	Sanna Steinfeldt (AU)

11.50-12.05	Ration Planning Tool for pigs and poultry	Antoine Roinsard (ITAB)
12.05-12.15	Conclusions	Bram Moeskops (IFOAM Organics Europe)

Day 2 - 26 January 2021		
Time	Topic	Speaker
9.15-9.30	Getting started	
9.30-9.45	Organic Farm Knowledge platform	Lauren Dietemann (FiBL)
	Theme: Animal welfare II	
9.45-10.00	Pig welfare from birth to slaughter in sustainable concepts	Anne Grete Kongsted (AU)
10.00-10.15	Keeping chicken outdoors	Stefan Gunnarsson (SLU)
10.15-10.45	Networking coffee break	
10.45-11.45	Panel discussion: Policy and society perspectives on organic pig and poultry production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: Bram Moeskops (R&I Manager, IFOAM Organics Europe) • Laurence Bonafos (Policy Coordinator, Organics, DG Agriculture & Rural Development, European Commission) • Andrea Gavinelli (Head of Unit Animal Welfare, DG Health and Food Safety, European Commission) • Olga Kikou (Head EU office, Compassion in World Farming) • Delphine Bouvry (Poultry farmer, FNAB-French Organic Farmers Federation) 	
11.45-12.00	Conclusions	Bram Moeskops (IFOAM Organics Europe)

II. Projects involved in the OK-Net EcoFeed final conference

As mentioned above, 4 projects: [OK-Net EcoFeed](#), [PPILOW](#), [FreeBirds](#) and [POWER](#) joined forces in the organization of the conference “Improving sustainability in organic poultry and pig production”. Details of the projects involved can be found below:

[OK-Net EcoFeed](#) - Organic Knowledge Network on Monogastric Animal Feed: OK-Net EcoFeed aims at helping organic pig and poultry farmers in achieving the goal of 100% use of organic and regional feed. The project has created a European network of innovation groups. It collected and developed new knowledge tools adapted to the needs of farmers and business actors. The ration planning tool developed by OK-Net EcoFeed is free to use and available on (add link).

[PPILOW](#) - Poultry and Pig Low-input and Organic production systems’ Welfare. PPILOW aims to co-construct innovations to improve poultry and pig welfare in organic and outdoor farming systems through a multi-actor

approach. PPILOW co-creates with end-users welfare self-assessment tools, innovative breeding and rearing strategies and techniques for improving the welfare of animals.

[FreeBirds](#) aims to develop more successful husbandry practices in organic poultry production in order to make the chickens spend more time outdoors, in accordance with the organic principles. The outdoor stay improves the birds' welfare and consolidates consumer acceptance and marketing of organic products.

[POWER](#) produces practical guidelines to improve pig welfare and health while reducing nutrient losses from outdoor areas. Further, the project will identify and test best practice cases of combined housing and pasture systems. POWER will evaluate the cost effectiveness, environmental footprints and resilience aspects of these systems.

To disseminate the outcomes of the conference a press release was published on the [OK-Net EcoFeed website](#) on the 26th of January, in the February [IFOAM Organics Europe newsletter](#) and shared with the EIP-AGRI services. The document provided information on the main messages of the conference and the statements from the [OK-Net EcoFeed](#), [PPILOW](#), [FreeBirds](#) and [POWER](#) project coordinators. The full press release can be read in the following chapter.

II.1 PRESS RELEASE: Solutions for sustainable feeding and animal welfare in organic farming – Research projects contribute

25-26 January 2021, online conference – Organic farmers strive to feed their animals with feed produced at or near the farm while ensuring animal well-being. In a joint conference, four research projects, [OK-Net EcoFeed](#), [PPILOW](#), [FreeBirds](#) and [POWER](#), presented solutions helping farms to implement these objectives in practice.

Bram Moeskops, IFOAM Organics Europe, coordinator of OK-Net EcoFeed said “Adopting a multi-actor approach, all four projects worked with farmers, advisers and researchers to improve animal welfare, identify sustainable feed sources and improve ration-planning for organic pigs and poultry.”

Anne Collin, INRAE, coordinator of PPILOW explained that PPILOW “evaluates animal welfare according to the One Welfare concept.” Anne elaborated “This concept considers animal welfare, economic, environmental, and social impacts including human well-being. The one welfare concept recognises that animal welfare, biodiversity and the environment are interconnected.”

Stefan Gunnarsson, SLU, coordinator of FreeBirds added that “Keeping layers and broiler chickens outdoor promotes bird welfare and health. Yet, outdoor production comes with challenges such as sanitary threats or predator pressure. Researchers and practitioners need to work together to find solutions.”

Anne Grete Kongsted, Aarhus University, coordinator of POWER elaborated that the POWER project is looking for solutions in pig production: “We look for practical solutions in the most prevalent organic pig production systems and we evaluate new practices developed by creative farmers across Europe.”

The conference showed access to knowledge is crucial for farmers wanting to improve their practices. That is why Organic Farm Knowledge was created. This online platform hosts a wide range of tools and resources, including almost 100 tools in the theme animal husbandry. [The ration-planning tool](#) developed within the OK-Net EcoFeed project is an example of such a tool. It allows calculating a balanced ration based on the composition of organic feedstuffs and the nutritional needs of slow-growing breeds.

III. Results: Outreach and impact of the event

To maximise the dissemination of the event and ensure the outreach of the messages conveyed by the projects involved, an intense communication effort was carried out prior to and during the conference. The sub-chapters below give an overview of the communication statistics and impact of the event.

III.1 Dissemination prior to the event

The OK-Net EcoFeed was largely disseminated through the IFOAM Organics Europe and OK-Net EcoFeed social media. A total of 10 posts were published on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn with 4200 views, the highest number, for the [Twitter post](#) published on the 14th of January and 400 views for the [Facebook post](#) published on the same date. Communication on LinkedIn also performed well, counting a maximum of 1000 views for the reminder of the [“last days to register”](#).

5 communication items, including news and articles, were published on the IFOAM Organics Europe website between October 2020 and February 2021 with a total view of 70.

Moreover, OK-Net EcoFeed project partners and the partners of the 3 projects involved contributed to the communication of the event by sharing the social media posts and the information published on the [OK-Net EcoFeed website](#) with their networks.

III.1.1 Live Tweeting

17 live tweets were posted between day 1 and day 2 of the conference. The most viewed live tweet concerned the policy debate and the closing statement: "To reach 25% #OrganicLand in EU we must work together. Production needs to \nearrow while we stay true to our principles. To improve practices, farmers need access to the right knowledge. This has to be a joint effort btw all #organic stakeholders". The full list of live tweets links and relative number of views can be seen below:

Table 1 Live tweets outreach

	Original content	Views
1	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1353626349798354944	900
2	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1353627021755228165	1300
3	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1353631886837489665	950
4	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1353635348304310272	1400
5	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1353640303773810688	2000
6	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1353657030792392709	800
7	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1353653608642916352	1200
8	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1353660540133011456	1500
9	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1353664735426863105	1500
10	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1353986446655414274	2500
11	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1353991134960357376	800
12	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1353995427822104578	750

13	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1354006807514124288	1500
14	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1354007941108670465	3000
15	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1354010273678561282	1500
16	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1354013494128111621	900
17	https://twitter.com/OrganicsEurope/status/1354026580763410435	3200

III.2 Impacts of the event

Statistical data of the 2-day event showed that the OK-Net EcoFeed final conference “Improving sustainability and welfare in organic poultry and pig production” received a total of 300 registrations. 2/3 of the total registered participants attended the event, equally distributed among the sessions: animal welfare I, animal welfare II, sustainable feeding, farmers’ experience, and the policy debate. 125 unique views, which is the absolute number of attendants and it excludes repeated log in from the same participant, were counted for the animal welfare I theme while each of the other sessions recorded about 100. This means that the conference reached experts in both the animal welfare and sustainable feeding fields with a well-balanced impact between all the topics tackled by the event. Furthermore, similar numbers about the unique views of the policy debate indicate that the conference successfully attracted a variety of stakeholders from farmers/advisers to researchers and policy makers.

The statistical data also showed that participants actively replayed the recording of sessions and downloaded the presentations from the speakers. A total of 150 unique replays were counted with 100 of them being on animal welfare I and II theme. The remaining 50 unique replays were equally distributed between sustainable feeding, farmers’ experience, and the policy debate. On the other hand, the highest number of comments and questions recorded in the chat box concerned the sustainable feeding followed by all the other themes. About 50 comments and questions were counted during the sustainable feeding against 40 for the other sessions. However, it can be concluded that the interest of the attendees was generally high and well-balanced among the different themes of the conference.

Social media dissemination

IV. Conclusions

Over the course of the 3-year project, OK-Net EcoFeed has made a valuable contribution to the achievement of 100% use of organic and regional feed goal. In line with the definition of multi actor projects, farmers, farmers’ groups, advisers and researchers, closely cooperated to reach the objectives proposed by OK-Net EcoFeed. The success of the final conference proves the this the right approach to create solutions that can be applied at European scale. Moreover, the cooperation with linked H2020 projects such as PPILOW, FreeBirds and POWER was of added value to the engagement and dialogue between end user/researchers and policy makers.