



European Consortium
of the Organic-Based Fertilizer
Industry

Building a credible European organic fertilizer industry

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An abbreviation

- Throughout this presentation, we use the term “organic-based fertilizers” (OBFs) to mean organic fertilizers, organo-mineral fertilizers and organic soil improvers
- Not to be confused with ‘fertilizers certified for organic agriculture’
 - *‘Fertilizers approved for use in organic farming’ are almost always ‘organic-based fertilizers’, but not all ‘organic-based fertilizers’ are approved for use in organic farming*



Differences between organic fertilizers, organo-mineral fertilizers and mineral fertilizers (according to FPR)

	Organic Fertilizers	Organo-mineral fertilizers	Mineral fertilizers
Carbon	≥15% (solid) ≥5% (liquid)	≥7.5% (solid) ≥3% (liquid)	<1%
Nutrient forms	Organic nutrients	Organic and mineral forms in every pellet, granule or other	Only inorganic forms of nutrients
Nutrient release	Slow nutrients converted to plant-available form by natural (soil) processes	Some immediate (mineral), some slow (organic) + controlled-release effect of organic material coating mineral forms	Immediately available to plants unless they contain a controlled-release technology (CRF)

The need to increase for greater credibility for OBFs

- ❖ Natural variations in nutrient content and natural deterioration of organic matter over time reduce OBF content predictability
- ❖ Product formulae of OBFs are more variable than for standardized mineral products
- ❖ Release rate/conversion of nutrients is affected by natural (soil) processes and thus less predictable for OBFs than for mineral products

How to build credibility for and trust in OBFs

- **Structuring the industry**



- There is a difference between suppliers of raw materials (e.g.: EFPPRA members) and manufacturers of organic-based fertilizers (e.g.: ECOFI members)
- OBF industry mostly made-up of SMEs in Europe
- Fertilizing Products Reg will be crucial to placing OBFs on SM once it enters into force in 2022
- Today, national rules structure the markets for OBFs in EU

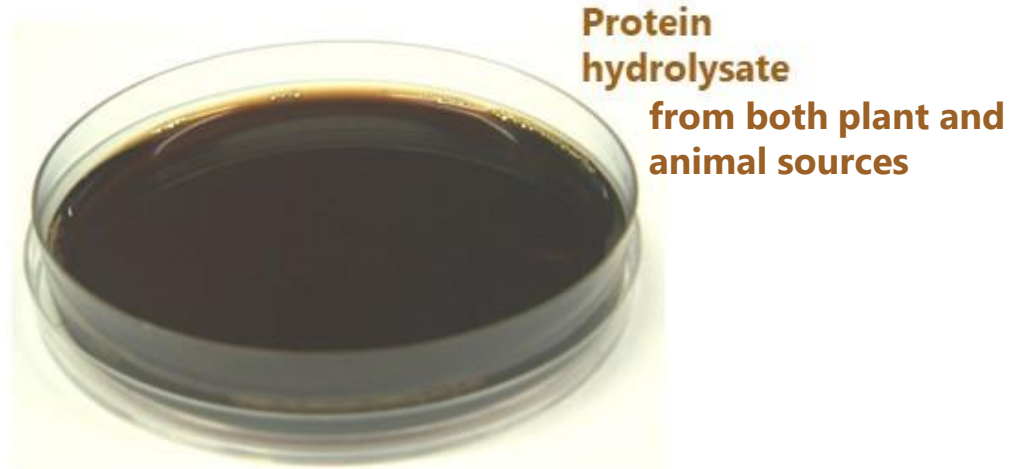


How to build credibility for and trust in OBFs

- **Ensuring traceability of all OBFs and their component raw materials**
- **Developing high-quality products and placing them on the market**
 - Producing consistent, high-quality products requires expertise in mixing different sources of raw materials to achieve consistent nutrient release rates



Examples of materials used in OBFs





Numerous raw materials of plant and animal origin from a variety of value chains are used in OBFs

Value Chain	Common raw materials
Directly sources	Seaweed and plant extracts, seaweed, vegetable cakes, peat, natural polymers
Livestock	Manure
Poultry flocks and wild bird colonies	Poultry litter, seabird guano, eggshells
Slaughterhouse	Feather meal, bone, blood, meat meal, horns, pig bristles, intestinal contents
Fish and seafood processing	Fish meal, fish bones, shells
Food/feed processing	Seaweed and plant extracts, seaweed, starch derivatives, vegetable cakes, coconut fibre, chaff, vegetable tops, husks, mushroom composts, fats and oils, yeasts

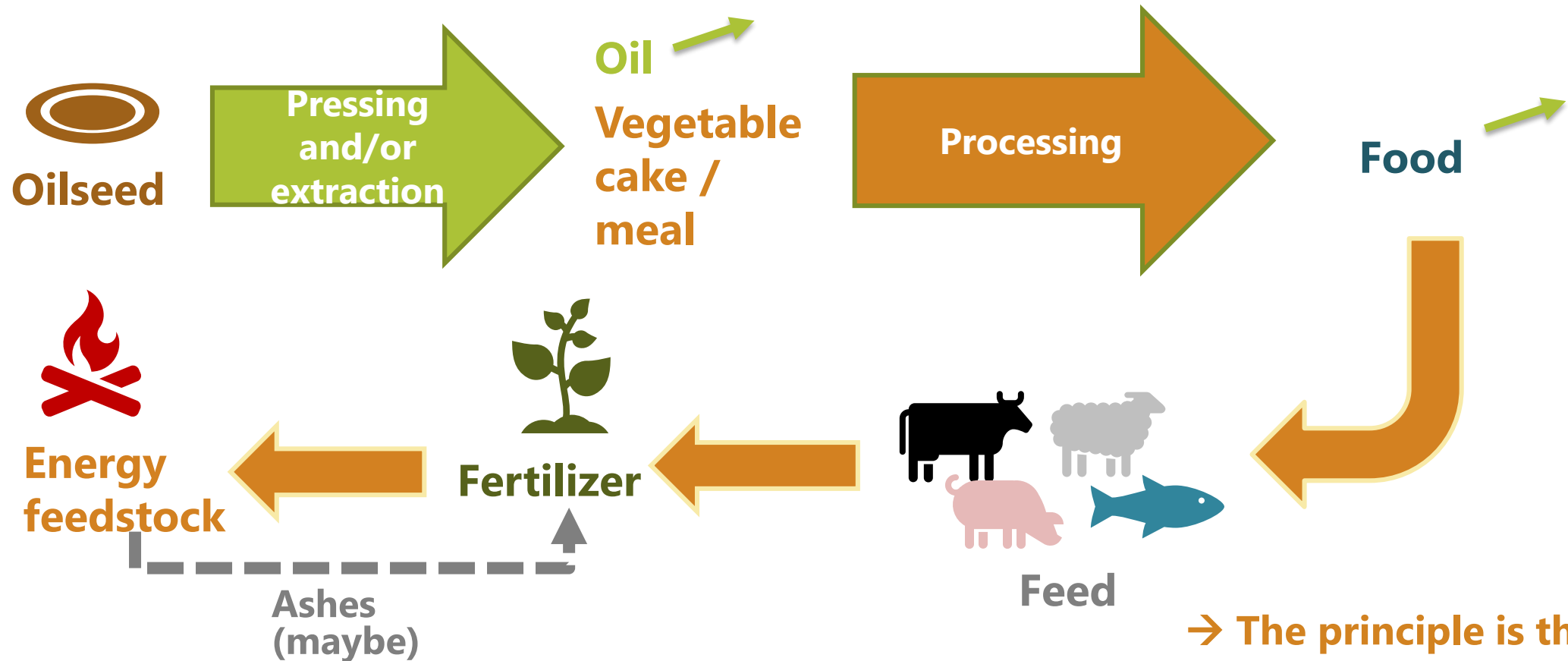


Numerous raw materials of plant and animal origin from a variety of value chains are used in OBFs (cont.)

Value Chain	Common raw materials
Sugar	Molasses, vinasse
Wine making	Marc, vegetable cakes, grape seeds, stalks, vinasse, yeasts
Vegetable oil processing	Vegetable cakes, pulps, pomaces
Petroleum	Lignite, leonardite
Cosmetics, medicines and perfumes	Seaweed and plant extracts, vegetable cakes
Textile industry	Flax shives, fibres, vegetable cakes, vegetable stones

The hierarchy for using organic materials

– the example of oilseed and vegetable cakes



→ The principle is that organic materials move downstream only if they are not appropriate for a “higher order” use.

High-Quality Final Products



- ✓ Consistent formulations
- ✓ Reliable performance
- ✓ Providing value to farmers



The organic-based fertilizer sector is research-based, knowledge-intensive and innovation-driven. The industry has found increasingly efficient, smart and effective ways to extract nutrients from an different sources of bio-based by-products and re-formulate them into safe, high-quality, and effective fertilizers and soil improvers with consistent nutrient release rates.



*ILSA SpA
laboratory – ECOFI
member*

OBFs help farmers to foster sustainability and combat climate change

- Processed organic fertilizers and soil improvers increase organic matter content of soils in a form which can be **transported economically and applied safely**. Lower water content means transport is more efficient for materials such as raw manures
- Combining the use of organic fertilizers with mineral fertilizers has been proven to **achieve higher crop yields** for farmers than either product alone.
- Organic-based fertilizers contribute to a resource-efficient, greener and more competitive economy thanks to the **beneficial natural processes they generate, and the circular model of production**
- They are not only a source of recycled nutrients, but also of **carbon sequestration – crucial to our fight against climate change**

OBFs help to foster soil biodiversity

- Organic matter is the lifeblood of healthy, fertile and productive soil, **storing more carbon in soils than plants and the atmosphere combined**. It also helps plants to grow and improves water retention and soil structure.
 - An organic coating around mineral inputs gives organo-mineral fertilizers controlled-release properties, thereby **increasing organic matter in the soil** while simultaneously delivering **essential nutrients to plants gradually**.
 - The presence of organic matter fosters **soil biodiversity**, so organo-mineral fertilizers can be used to help restore their organic matter content and therefore **bring degraded soils back to health**
- **This allows the industry to advocate some of the environmental benefits of OBFs**



ECOFI is the voice of the OBFs sector in Europe...

- Producers of organic fertilizers, organo-mineral fertilizers and organic soil improvers
- Members active in most European countries, the Mediterranean and the Middle East
- Accounts for roughly 60% of the European market in organic-based fertilizers, which is worth about €250 million euros
- The industry is dominated by SMEs



ECOFI Board transition 2018

...supplying information to policy-makers and society about OBFs

- ECOFI advocates for high-quality products and standards to provide the greatest value per unit to farmers
- ECOFI promotes the role of organic-based fertilizing products (see our blog on www.ecofi.info or follow us on Twitter [@OrganiCarbon](https://twitter.com/OrganiCarbon))
- ECOFI Membership is open to **any producer** of OBFs active in Europe who can **ensure the traceability** of their components
- We are looking to develop opportunities for closer cooperation with **suppliers of raw materials**

Organic fertilizers and industrial symbiosis

November 5, 2018



In nature, symbiosis refers to a close interrelation between two different organisms. An example of such is the mutually beneficial relationship between

goby fish and shrimp. While the shrimp burrows [More...](#)



Organic fertilizers in EU regulation

October 22, 2018



The EU Fertilizer Regulation is currently undergoing its first revision since 2003. The new draft regulation proposed to replace it was the first dossier

under the EU's new Circular Economy package. The [More...](#)



ECOFI @OrganiCarbon · Jan 16



An increase of just 0.4% of organic matter in soils across the world could stop the increase of CO2 in the atmosphere in its tracks! 🏡 4p1000.org 🌍

Follow ECOFI's good resolutions on [#SoilHealth](https://twitter.com/SoilHealth) to be part of the solution in 2019 ecofi.info/2019/01/good-r... 🌱💡❤️

A bright future for OBFs...

- There are many **opportunities** for OBFs in the coming years
 - **Single Market open** to OBFs in 2022 thanks to FPR
 - Promotion of the **bio-based circular economy** fosters the OBF sector
 - Increasing focus on **environmental protection drives demand for OBFs**
 - **Soil health** and protecting soils from degradation
 - Protecting **biodiversity**, including soil biodiversity
 - **Carbon sequestration** capacity of organic matter in soils

A bright future for OBFs (cont.)

...To maximise the potential of these opportunities, the industry must

➤ **Prove its credibility** by

- Ensuring safety and **traceability** of raw material components
- Continuing to deliver and develop **high-quality** products which provide added value to farmers
- Increasing **stakeholder engagement**, to ensure that
 - Farmers know how to use products for optimal benefits
 - Other stakeholders understand the role of OBFs in numerous policy objectives

Thank you for your attention

- For more information, including on joining, our work on promoting the role of OBFs or our comments on the fertilizing products reg:
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