

**European Commission
EU Organic Awards Organising Committee
Brussels**

Ede, 28 april 2023

To whom it may concern,

Dear Madam, Sir,

On behalf of Bionext and the Dutch Organic Movement I would like to offer our support for the application of the province of Noord-Brabant regarding the Best Organic Region Award.

Here in The Netherlands, we have a poor track record when it comes to organic agriculture. There are many reasons why this is the case but perhaps the most important one is the fact that our national and provincial governments have in the past put high production targets above environmental impact. As you probably know this strategy has led to numerous crises including water pollution, nitrogen, animal welfare issues, biodiversity loss, soil degradation and CO2 emissions. It is crucial for The Netherlands to go down a different road but the first step is often the hardest. The fact that Noord-Brabant, as one of the largest agricultural provinces, has elected to set a concrete goal for organic production cannot be underestimated. It is an example for other provinces to follow suit and even the National Government is studying the developments closely. Perhaps other regions in Europe are further along as an organic region but what Noord-Brabant is doing will have a massive impact on the organic production in The Netherlands for the coming years and therefore we kindly ask you to take this into consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Michaël Wilde