

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

Drimmelen, may 2023

Dear Madam, Sir,

On behalf of the organic farmers I would like to offer our support for the application of the province of Noord-Brabant regarding the Best Organic Region Award.

Brabant is an agricultural province; its agricultural system is traditionally based on producing as efficient as possible. This was necessary after World War II when the national policy was to produce as much as we could. And that is what every farmer did. Getting more efficient every year. But Brabant realizes this system is not future proof. When they wrote a new policy on agriculture for the coming years, they realized they needed a strategy on organic as an important part of a more sustainable agriculture. We offered them advice. Which means that more than 80 organic farmers worked together to formulate the most important conditions for organic farming in Brabant. We were very glad that the province really listened and handed us a very ambitious action plan in return. An organic action plan that will help the organic sector move forward.

Brabant realizes that farmers will not switch to organic if the demand for organic food does not rise. That is why we are glad Brabant took our advice seriously and wrote an ambitious organic action plan. And we notice this is more than just words, they are working along the way: with pilots in supermarkets and with caterers, opening an international organic network for us, stimulating organic products in public kitchens, helping farmers with subsidies for a switch and most of all by actively spreading the word, sharing information and realizing (inter)national collaborations for organic. What Brabant is doing will make more farmers go organic, not only in Brabant, but in the rest of the Netherlands as well. That deserves a nomination for best organic region in the EU!

Yours sincerely,



On behalf of the organic farmers
Pipie Smits Van Oyen