

PRESS RELEASE



Real Organic Project and Naturland Forge Partnership to Promote Organic Agriculture

New collaboration expands support for organic farmers across the globe

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Naturland announces a newly formed partnership with the Real Organic Project, a grassroots organization to support organic agriculture and farmers in the United States of America. The collaborative venture between both organizations will focus on increasing the marketplace for certified organic growers and processors who meet the highest integrity and sustainability criteria.

“With the Real Organic Project we have found a partner in the U.S. who shares the same values and vision to create greater impact for eaters and farmers. Together we can make a difference for organic smallholders around the world,” said **Steffen Reese, CEO at Naturland**. “We were inspired by Naturland’s longevity and transparency. Our organizations both operate on a synergistic level when it comes to certification and foundational organic principles. We believe Naturland’s expertise will provide important guidance that will help shape our growth into the future,” said **Dave Chapman, Co-director at Real Organic Project**.

Both organizations are farmer-led and dedicated to the integrity of organic

Both organizations are farmer-led with quality-driven approaches to organic production and certification. The partnership will help support small and mid-sized farms not only in the U.S. and the E.U. but also throughout many parts of the globe. A joint venture to be established by both partners will work to certify organic processors within North America while also facilitating the import of Naturland certified products both raw and processed into the U.S. under a joint Real Organic Project seal.

The Real Organic Project began in 2018 as a direct result from actions taken by the National Organic Program to allow the certification of hydroponics and confinement animal operations as USDA Organic. Real Organic farmers decided to take a stand and came together to protect the intent of the organic label that they’ve worked so hard to nurture.

“After failed attempts to advise and guide the USDA National Organic Program, a group of organic farmers decided to forge a partnership to create an independent add-on certification to the USDA label to designate and distinguish the farms that steward healthy soils and animals under their care,” said **Dave Chapman, Co-director at the Real Organic Project**. “There are still many real organic farms in the U.S., but corporate greenwashing and marketing have made it difficult for eaters and farmers to find each other in a crowded and confusing marketplace,” said **Real Organic Project Co-director, Linley Dixon**.

About Real Organic Project

The Real Organic Project is a grassroots, farmer-led non-profit focused on integrity within the certified

organic food system. The Real Organic Project manages an add-on label for farmers committed to the foundational values and practices of organic farming: healthy soils and livestock grazing on well-managed pastures. The ROP-farm partners are all committed to shared real organic principles and the organization currently certifies over 1,000 farms in the U.S. and Canada. As part of the certification program, the organization is committed to educational outreach to strengthen the organic movement. The Real Organic Project provides a platform for experts from diverse backgrounds in agriculture, science and education through its annual symposia, widely popular podcast series, and weekly letters. To learn more, please visit:

www.realorganicsproject.org

About Naturland

Naturland is the world's largest international organic association and has been pioneering the development of organic farming in Germany, Europe and beyond for 40 years. Following a holistic approach, Naturland was the first organic association to introduce social standards as a mandatory element of organic certification, supplemented by the organic plus fair-trade standard: Naturland Fair. Today, some 120,000 farmers from 60 countries work according to the Naturland standards. Nearly 5,000 organic farms belong to this community in Germany alone. The majority of Naturland farmers around the world are organized in small farming cooperatives and producer associations.

www.naturland.de/en/

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