

Viewpoint: German agricultural economist argues organic crops suffer from low yields, nitrogen leaching, and higher levels of heavy metals — and says ‘greening conventional’ farming is more sustainable

Organic farming sees itself as a superior form of land use. Whether this positive view is justified can be measured by the extent to which this form of land use contributes to solving current problems such as food security, climate change, biodiversity, nitrate input, food quality and sustainability of soil fertility and to what economic and social costs.

Compared to conventional crop rotations, organic crop rotations only bring about 50 percent of the yield... In the long term, they reduce the nutrient content of the soil and endanger the sustainability of yields.

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Organic subsidies would be better used to promote the further greening of conventional agriculture. Instead of promoting uncompromising ideologies, it would be time to further develop tried and tested concepts for protecting the climate and species and spreading them.

[Editor’s note: This article was originally published in German and has been translated and edited for clarity.]

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