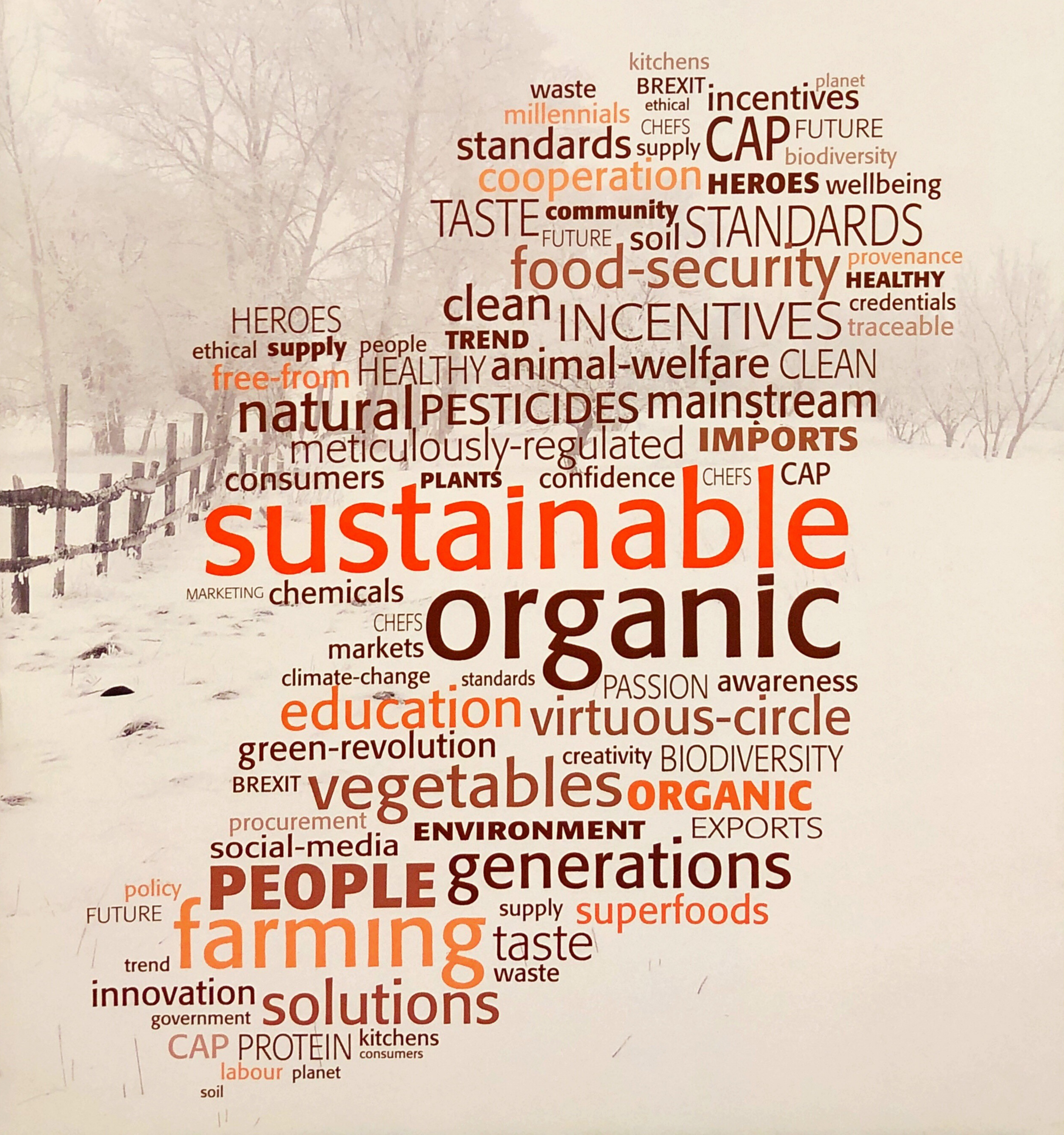
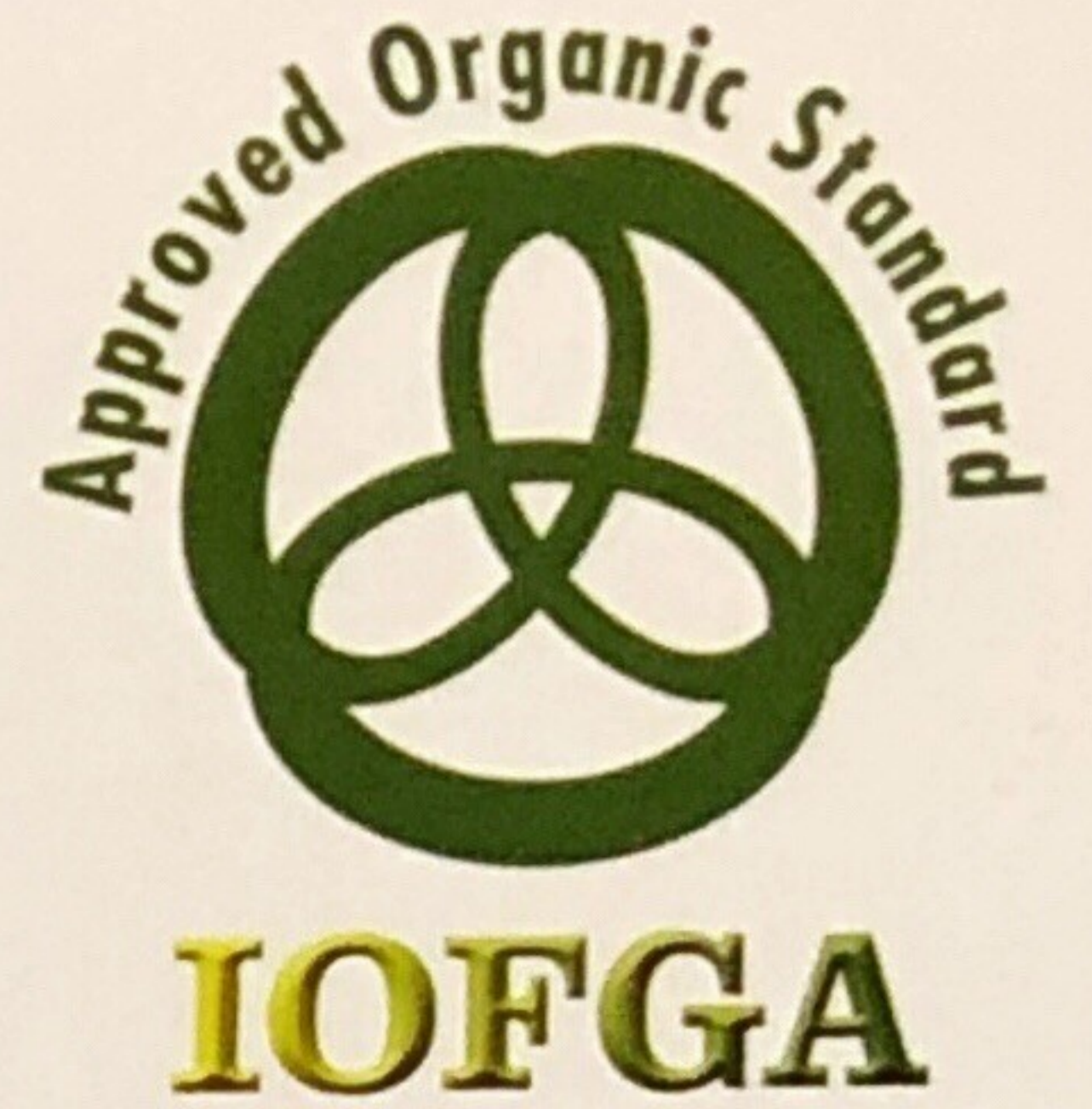


# organic matters



kitchens  
 waste  
 millennials  
 standards  
 cooperation  
 TASTE  
 clean  
 free-from  
 natural  
 meticulously-regulated  
 consumers  
 PLANTS  
 education  
 green-revolution  
 BREXIT  
 procurement  
 social-media  
 policy  
 FUTURE  
 trend  
 innovation  
 government  
 CAP  
 labour  
 soil  
 kitchens  
 ethical  
 CHEFS  
 supply  
 incentives  
 planet  
 FUTURE  
 biodiversity  
 wellbeing  
 community  
 soil  
 STANDARDS  
 provenance  
 HEALTHY  
 credentials  
 traceable  
 animal-welfare  
 CLEAN  
 PESTICIDES  
 mainstream  
 IMPORTS  
 confidence  
 CHEFS  
 CAP  
 sustainable  
 organic  
 CHEFS  
 markets  
 climate-change  
 standards  
 education  
 virtuous-circle  
 PASSION  
 awareness  
 green-revolution  
 creativity  
 BIODIVERSITY  
 vegetables  
 ORGANIC  
 ENVIRONMENT  
 EXPORTS  
 generations  
 supply  
 superfoods  
 taste  
 waste  
 solutions  
 CAP  
 PROTEIN  
 consumers  
 planet

# VISION

FOR the *future* of

# ORGANIC FOOD

IOFGA have been certifying organic food in Ireland for the past 30 years. There are currently 2,127 people who hold an organic licence in Ireland, that includes farmers, growers, retailers, processors and restaurants. The land area under organic management is approximately 72,000ha.

The Organic Farming Scheme (OFS) is a support mechanism run under the Rural Development Programme and 1,787 producers participate in it farming approximately 65,000ha. In statistical terms this means that just under 2% of all farmers in Ireland are now farming organically, way below the European average of 6%.

Over the past 30 years the number of people involved in organic farming has stagnated at around 1% of farmers, however in 2015 the sector was shaken up as an unprecedented number of farmers converted to organic production. That year over 500 people joined the OFS in two separate tranches of the scheme. They joined for a variety of reasons, however the overwhelming factor is that organic food is a sector in growth. Sales of organic food have exploded globally and in the EU alone are worth €30billion. In Ireland sales have increased by 23% and a detailed picture of sales including retail, online and direct is currently being compiled to give a comprehensive overview of the current state of the market.

Acknowledging the growing momentum both from producers and consumers of organic food here in Ireland, it is vital that we now design the infrastructure to further expand and grow the sector allowing it to reach its full potential. There are many great examples from other countries with mature developed organic industries, and we need to learn from them to ensure sustained growth. IOFGA spoke to a variety of people in the food industry to hear their thoughts and views on where organic food lies in their vision for the future of food.

## GILLIAN WESTBROOK IOFGA CEO



My vision is for a fair support system for organic producers to reflect their delivery of public goods. A coherent sectorial strategy that will ensure adequate routes to market, coupled with research and marketing infrastructure to improve and support the increase in organic production. Organic food needs to be available to all societal groups and retail availability and product ranges increased to provide 'Organic at every table'. Core to sustainable production is an equitable and fair farm gate price, as well as recognition of the myriad of benefits to society as a whole from organic production.

Organic production and processing will become increasingly main-stream over the coming years. Environmental protection and public health policy will place more accountability onto Member States to prevent and protect, rather than cure. Biodiversity and climate change mitigation will play a much bigger role in the justification of farm supports and the future CAP structure will reflect new environmental targets. It's my vision that organic production and processing will be central to the future of sustainable food systems and consumer awareness of what is required to be certified organic will increase exponentially.

## RORY O'CONNELL Chef and author



It sometimes seems to me that organic farmers are seen almost as terrorists or at least crazy by the "conventional" farming world. This amazes me as I see organic farmers as the peace keepers of the soil - they ensure stability, more peaceful existence for all the creatures that live under our feet working away to maintain the soil that produces our food to nourish and maintain us. No chemical bombs, no unnecessary intervention - just sustainable co-existence. I would like to erect statues to honour our organic farmers many of whom I see as some of the real heroes of our time.

## SASU LAUKKONEN celebrated Finnish chef who uses organic and local Finnish ingredients, new restaurant Ora in Helsinki.



I fell that even in organic kitchens we can really reduce the volume of waste as it is shameful. We need to be creative about it and make sure that we use everything to feed even more people. We need to change the rules and not tolerate waste.

## ESTHER Slieve Aughty



With creativity and a passion for organic food, our aim is to offer delicious, healthy meals using only natural and organic ingredients. I strongly believe that organic food is not only better for you but better for the environment.

## JP McMAHON Chef and author



Organic food is vitally important for the future of Irish food. Organic farming is necessary in order to promote soil sustainability. The government needs to do more to assist farmers in their conversion to organic farming. Ireland has the potential to be a world leader in organic farming because of our close knit community of small farmers.

**BERNARD KING**

Organic Farmer Connemara

I think that organic is the future of food, it is the way to go for farmers and if Ireland wants to really go green then it should go organic.



**JIMMY MULHALL**

Coolanowle Organic Farm

I think organic food is poised to become much more important and a bigger part of our lives. There is a huge growth in interest in organic food, particularly from young well educated people and these are tomorrows shoppers.



**PARAIC DUNLEAVY** Organic Farmer

The lowest hanging fruit for any aspect of the organic sector in Ireland be it meat, vegetables, eggs etc is public procurement. If you look at other countries where organic has really taken off it is because of public procurement, yes governments support organic producers through financial schemes but where they show real commitment is by procuring organic food for public kitchens. That is what makes a real difference to the success of an organic industry. Ireland needs to replicate that model here and then we can really see how the industry can develop and expand.



Organic produce will be seen on more and more menus and shopping lists throughout the country and will become much more widely available following the path that it has taken right across Europe.

**ULRICH HOECHE**

Chef and Lecturer

As a chef in the hotel industry for many years and now a lecturer in Culinary Arts it is my view that organic is the way forward, however, to make an all-encompassing food system sustainable other factors must be considered such as animal welfare and our 'Personal Carbon Foot Print' i.e. the distance that food travels.



**NOEL BARCOE**

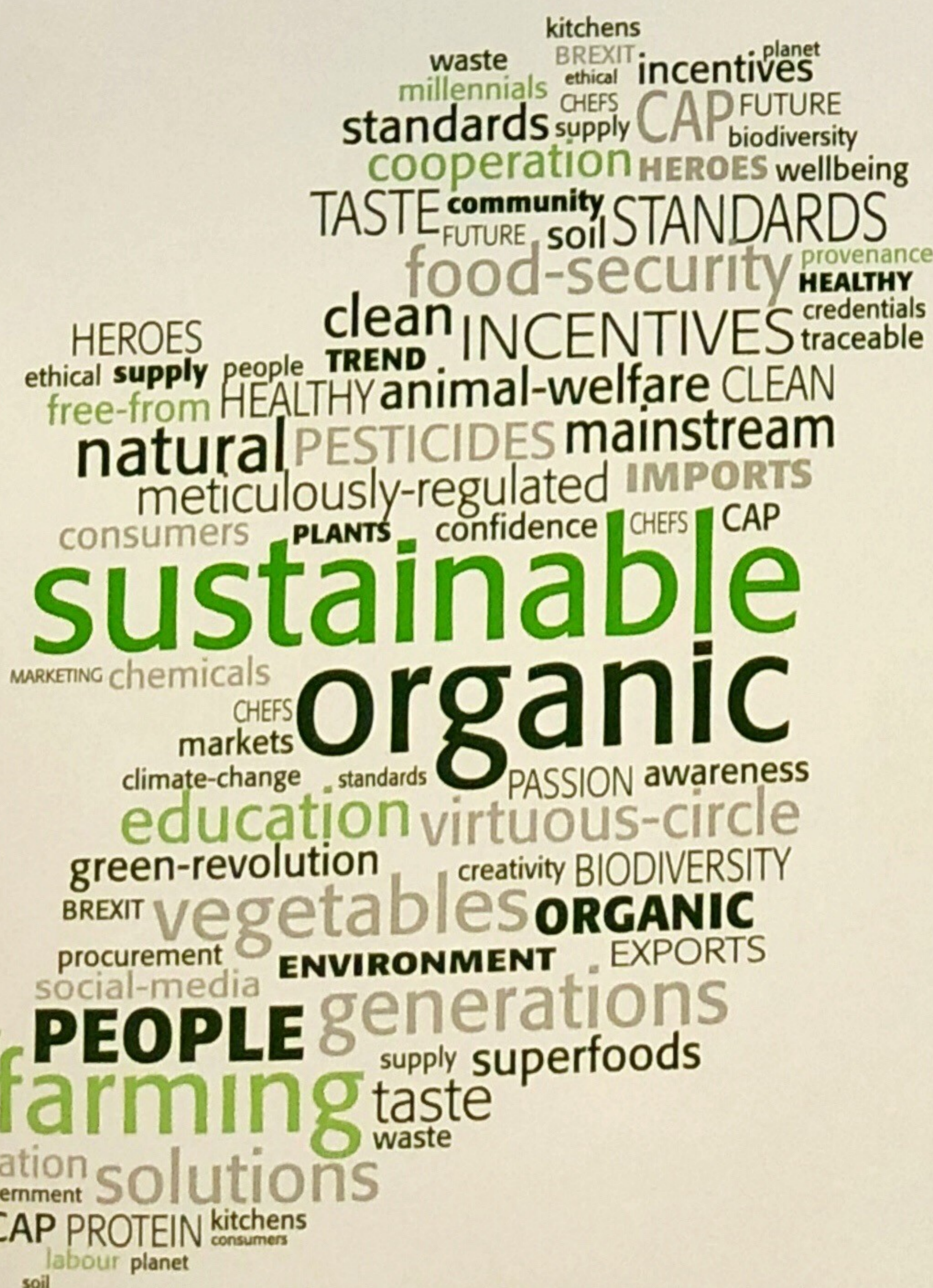
General Manager, Village Dairy

At the village dairy we are proud to have an organic range of products, it allows us to produce a more natural product for our customers. Although, currently, it can be noticed that there is a lack of organic dairy farmers in Ireland with not enough government incentives in place, making it difficult to grow our range of organic products which we and our customers really believe in. Growing the organic dairy sector in Ireland will reduce the large volumes of organic dairy imports Ireland receives, benefiting all in the organic dairy sector.



Denmark is leading the way with an organic market share of approximately 10% of all food products sold in the country, with a steady increase over the last ten years. We need to research the models, programmes and initiatives adopted by the Danes, as a source of inspiration and guidance.

A considerable amount of work is required by food producers, chefs and culinary educators to change the public's way of thinking. In the future, we will need to reach a stage whereby people make a conscious decision to purchase organic and sustainably produced foods as a first choice, because it is the power of the consumer that influences the overall food production system."



**ORGANIC FARMING BENEFITS EVERYONE**  
 healthy soil  
 = healthy plants  
 = healthy people

**ORGANIC AT EVERY TABLE**  
 let's make it happen,  
 accessible for all

**ORGANIC FOOD IS HERE TO STAY**  
 we have an organic future

**CREATE OUR OWN GREEN REVOLUTION**  
 make market opportunities a reality