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# THE DARK SIDE OF ORGANIC FARMING

BIO

52'  
By Rémi Delescluse  
Produced by STP productions



**Organic farming is progressively becoming more mechanized and globalized. Discover an international investigation into the organic industry – filmed on hidden camera – which also offers the first in-depth study of the exact composition of the biopesticides produced and sold by the agrochemical giants.**

Behind the appeal to nature lies a darker reality: the agribusiness has progressively foregone organic agriculture's core principles to resort to conventional agriculture's old ways. This sector has been in dire straits for more than two years. Both because of a crisis of confidence, due to the numerous scandals about "fake organics", to the discovery of dubious social and production practices and to the attempted corruptions of states; and because of a crisis of production, because it can no longer keep up with the demand and the lowering of production costs in order to respond to the demands of mass distribution, which has become the majority sales channel – far from its core tenets of reasoned, local agriculture. Delve into this unique international investigation at the heart of organic farming, produced by the same team as "Mass-Market Retailing: The End of a System?".

## **Summary :**

This documentary aims to shed light on the crisis that European organic agriculture has been grappling with. For many years, the organic sector has kept up appearances to conform to its consumers' expectations, without bothering to correct them. But appearances can be deceiving. Organic farming has long been associated with a form of purity. Today it has become mechanized, globalized and financialized. This film is an inside look into the gap between the image of organic farming and its reality. As a matter of fact, organic agriculture has become, for the most part, a production-oriented industry. Furthermore, organic farming is not without its scandals.

For the past two years, the press has regularly reported on numerous cases in France, Germany, Spain and China. Our investigation shows how agribusiness has taken over part of this sector, setting aside organic farming's founding principles in favor of conventional agriculture's same old methods. In the end, organic agriculture has become nothing more than a set of specifications that adjusts to the pressures applied by the sector's key players.

This film aims to reveal the consequences of this entryism for producers, farmers, workers, consumers and of course the earth. Because beyond market issues, one of organic farming's original goals was indeed to preserve biodiversity. The subject is taboo, but at this very moment, the traditional chemical pesticide companies are also in the process of converting to organic. Shedding a light on this topic is one of the issues that motivated us to make this documentary.

Bayer, DuPont, BASF, Syngenta all want their share of the cake and are developing a new range of biopesticides that they call "biocontrol". Pinky swear, everything is natural. But the composition of their products remains confidential. This project aims, in collaboration with a French laboratory, to carry out the first in-depth study on these biopesticides to try to know the exact composition of the products sold by the agrochemical giants to the organic sector.

But beyond these various revelations, this project is not all doom and gloom, as organic agriculture is also a sector in full bloom. Through the voice of many experts and researchers, we will demonstrate, with supporting documents, that the effects of this biobusiness on the environment remain much more virtuous than conventional agriculture – or all these new labels flourishing across Europe, and designed to confuse consumers. Our objective is to expose the challenges ahead of this sector for it to keep developing; so it can be democratized without compromising itself. In point of fact, a part of the profession is actively working towards two-tiered organic farming: a first tier of organic farming to grow accessible produce while remaining vigilant to avoid the pitfalls of conventional agriculture; and a higher tier, avant-garde, able to fully reconnect with the founding principles of organic farming to reassure consumers. Both entail the independence of farms, a reasoned and high-quality local production, and the absolute respect of the environment.

While organic agriculture is not perfect, it is still leaps and bounds ahead of all other sectors in food production.

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