

## Fruit Cross Visit

### Organic Apple Production & Advisory Support in Conversion

**SERBIA, BELGRADE – GROCKA – SMEDEREVO REGION**

**26 - 28 MAY 2026**



The **OrganicAdviceNetwork** project aims to build a strong network of advisors with organic competences across Europe. As part of this mission, the project organizes cross visits for agricultural advisors to meet, exchange and share their innovative organic farming practices.

The Grocka and Smederevo region is one of the traditional fruit-growing areas near Belgrade and represents an interesting case for exploring advisory support in the conversion of apple orchards to organic production.

The Cross Visit in Serbia explores organic apple production through one central question: what truly determines the success of conversion in perennial systems? In perennial crops, there is no quick reset. Ideally conversion needs to be done step by step to allow for the system to adapt gradually. Fruit growing strategies and pest management redesign shape the orchard for the long term, influencing productivity, resilience and economic viability for years ahead.

These topics will be explored through presentations by the IPN advisory team, a field visit to a certified organic apple orchard in the Grocka region and discussions with advisors from the Regional Advisory Service in Smederevo on advisory approaches. Field visit on the third day, to the “Zeleni hit” production site presenting innovative practices in organic horticulture, including growing management techniques and alternative pest control approaches.

This three-day program in Serbia (Belgrade – Grocka – Smederevo region) brings together agricultural advisors to explore these crucial early-stage decisions. Through expert sessions, orchard visits and structured reflection, participants will gain practical insight into how advisory support guides farmers through this complex, long-term transition. This covers the system of advisor training and licensing, in order to fully support different needs of farmers.

### **What you can expect from this cross visit**

This cross visit provides a focused insight into organic apple production in Serbia, with special attention to conversion and advisory support. By the end of the visit, you will:

- Understand the main technical challenges of converting apple orchards to organic systems.
- Gain practical insights from a certified organic orchard in the Grocka region.
- Explore advisory approaches supporting farmers during the transition process. This covers the level of professional and / or administrative support.
- Learn new / alternative pest and disease management practices.
- Exchange experiences with international peers and identify transferable practices

### DAY 1 – 26 May 2026

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
13:00 - 13:30	Welcoming participants	Meeting point: Institute for the Application of Science in Agriculture (IPN), Bulevar despota Stefana 68b, Belgrade
13:30 - 14:30	Introduction	Introduction to the cross-visit program and organic apple production advisory context in Serbia. Round table to get to know each other.
14:30 - 14:45	Break	
14:45 - 16:00	Presentation	Organic apple production in Serbia – technical challenges in conversion to organic farming – IPN team
16:00 - 17:00	Exchange	Advisory approaches supporting farm conversion in perennial crop systems
17:00 - 17:30	Reflections of the first day	Exchange on lessons learnt and expectations
19:00	Social dinner	

### DAY 2 – 27 May 2026

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
09:00 - 10:00	Meeting and travel to the farm	Meeting point: IPN, Belgrade
10:00 - 12:30	<b>Visit 1:</b> Organic apple farm visit	Certified organic apple orchard in the Grocka region – soil fertility, pest management and irrigation practices
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch	
14:15 - 15:30	<b>Visit 2:</b> Regional Farm Advisory Service visit	Meeting with advisors – advisory support for conversion to organic production – Field Experiences on different Organic production aspects
15:30 - 16:30	Discussion session	Exchange on advisory methods and challenges in transition

16:30 - 18:00	Reflection on the second day	Exchange on lessons learnt from the visits
18:00 - 19:00	Return to Belgrade	

### DAY 3 – 28 May 2026

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
09:00 - 10:00	Meeting and travel to the farm	Meeting point: IPN, Belgrade
10:00 - 11:30	<b>Visit 3:</b> “Zeleni hit” field visit	New practices in production – Beyond the common organic practices.
12:30 - 13:30	Closing session	Discussion on lessons learnt from visits and feedback to farms
13:30 - 13:45	Working session	Presentation of key lessons learned
13:45 - 14:30	Evaluation survey	Participant feedback
14:30	End of Cross Visit	

## Practical Information

### Requirements

All participants are expected to attend the full cross-visit program. Arriving late or leaving early is not possible, except for local participants. On the second day, we will travel from Belgrade to the Grocka region and Smederevo, where farm and advisory service visits will take place. Transportation will be organized within the program. The cross visit will conclude according to the official program schedule. Departure times depend on individual travel arrangements.

### Participants

The cross visit is open to agricultural advisors supporting organic farmers or farmers in conversion, as well as advisors and young professionals interested in strengthening their competences in organic advisory work. Maximum number of participants: 20.

### Registration

During registration, you will be asked to provide basic personal information, a short motivation statement and indicate whether you are able to cover your travel costs. Participation is not automatic, as the number of places is limited. Selected participants will receive a confirmation message.

First-round registration deadline: 10 April 2026

Confirmation of participation: 17 April 2026

The registration deadline may be extended in case of available places.

Registration link: [Cross Visit: Organic Apple Production & Advisory Support in Conversion, Serbia, 24-26 May – Fill out form](#)

### Travel costs

If you do not have an available budget to cover your travel costs, the OrganicAdviceNetwork advisory partner in your country may reimburse part of your expenses. Eligible countries for cost reimbursement are: FR, DE, IT, BG, EE, DK, AT, CH, HU, ES, PT, HR, RO, IE, NL, SE, FI, CZ, PL, GR, SI, RS. Eligible costs include transport (train or flight), accommodation (2–3 nights), and participation-related costs, up to a maximum limit defined by the project (approximately 400–800 EUR per participant, depending on distance).

After confirmation of participation, you will receive detailed information from the advisory project partner in your country regarding reimbursement conditions.

### Estimated costs during the Cross Visit

Costs during the Cross Visit in Belgrade are estimated at approximately 260–300 EUR per participant. This estimation includes two nights of accommodation in Belgrade (26–28 May 2026) with breakfast, one lunch and two dinners paid individually by participants.

Rooms will be pre-reserved in hotels located near the Institute for the Application of Science in Agriculture (IPN) in central Belgrade. Average hotel prices in this area are estimated between 90 and 110 EUR per night including breakfast, depending on availability and booking time.

The average price of a lunch in Serbia is approximately 15 - 20 EUR, while a dinner in a restaurant typically costs 25 - 30 EUR per person. Two program lunches will be covered by the project budget, while one lunch and two dinners will be paid individually by participants.

Local transport for the field visits (Belgrade – Grocka – Smederevo – Belgrade) and coffee breaks during the program will be covered by the project.

This estimation does not include international travel to Belgrade, airport transfers, additional accommodation nights before or after the Cross Visit, or personal expenses. Participants are responsible for organising their travel to Belgrade according to their own arrangements.

### Contact information

For any additional information, please contact:

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