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Dear readers,

The Commission proposal for a new Regulation is now on the table and is the key issue on the organic agenda in Europe.

Throughout the Organic Regulation review process, IFOAM EU has been consistent in underlining that a complete overhaul of a successful and living legal framework was not needed. Nevertheless, we have contributed greatly to the Commission’s review with detailed advice based on our members’ broad expertise and input gathered from all parts of the organic sector. As a result, the Commission has included some of IFOAM EU’s suggestions in the legal proposal for a new EU Organic Regulation. However, from our perspective ‘organically grown’ signifies produce that has had time to grow to a high quality and sustainably. In this respect Organic is about evolution, not about revolution and therefore organic legislation also has to be able to grow organically. For the continuity of the organic sector it is much better to have on-going improvements based on the sector’s actual needs and developments rather than a lack of progress for many years and complete renewal of the Regulation once in a decade. The development and application of a completely new Regulation also brings with it a significant level of uncertainty, with the prospective legal changes, leading to many years of insecurity for organic operators until the final outcomes are reached and implemented. Therefore IFOAM EU rejects the proposal if it is not substantially changed.

The proposal is now in the hands of the Council and the Parliament. IFOAM EU consulted its membership broadly via its nationally elected delegates about their views on the new proposal. These views were brought together and discussed at the IFOAM EU Council meeting on 28 April and at the IFOAM EU Stakeholder Conference on the Organic Regulation Review on 29 April, both held in Brussels. While more detailed statements will be worked out in the coming weeks, consensus was reached to call on Member States and Members of the European Parliament to reject the legislative draft in the current form and demand substantial changes to the review approach.

We do not agree with major parts of the Impact Assessment report provided by the Commission as we believe that it does not adequately question the possible consequences of changes set out in the proposal. The impacts mentioned in the report are only qualitative, but no assessment has been done on the number of producers and the specific countries that would be affected. Indeed the report itself acknowledges the lack of data available!

For instance, how many producers, would have to leave the sector as a result of a sudden ending of certain exceptional rules? As a number of questions remain open, IFOAM EU hence recommends that more time is taken for an in-depth analysis to complement the Impact Assessment as it establishes the basis for the Commission’s legal proposal.

Generally, IFOAM EU supports the Commission’s intention to improve organic standards according to the organic principles, but disagrees with some of the chosen means, such as the speed of reducing exceptional rules or the introduction of specific thresholds for non-authorised substances, in particular pesticides, which drives the organic sector’s process-oriented inspection approach towards product-oriented inspection outcomes. In the current situation where the polluter-pays principle is insufficiently applied for pesticide use, the introduction of pesticide thresholds, set out in the Commission’s proposal, would punish organic producers rather than those farmers using pesticides that contaminate organic produce.

We are convinced that a balance between the organic principles and their feasibility to be harmonised at EU level must be achieved, with successful elements of the current legal framework preserved. The current legal framework on organic farming (EC) No 834/2007 provides a very good basis and its potential in terms of better implementation and targeted improvements can still be exploited.

The publication of a new Action Plan on the future of Organic Production in Europe is welcomed as the making of a new action plan responds to a long standing demand of the organic movement to better coordinate all relevant EU policies towards the improvement and expansion of the organic sector. However, while the analysis of the current developments and challenges in the organic sector is described well and concise in the Action Plan, we regret that the Plan lacks ambition for concrete and committed action. On the other hand, where actions are proposed, dedicated budgets for specific actions in areas such as promotion of organic production and products, value chains and research are missing.

With the Commission’s proposal sent to the Council and the Parliament, the future of EU organic legislation now rests in the hands of our national and future EU representatives with the co-decision process offering various opportunities to engage. IFOAM EU will continue to put forward the EU organic movement’s point of view and set out concrete proposals that can stimulate the development of quality sustainable food and farming that have been the success of organics and can continue to be for decades to come.

Yours sincerely,

Bavo van Idsert
IFOAM EU Board Member
1 NEWS FROM IFOAM EU WORKING FIELDS

1.1 REGULATION

NEW IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS PUBLISHED


- In Article 24.2, which concerns veterinary treatment, “homeopathic products” have been reinserted following their incorrect omission by amendments approved in 2012.
- In Annex I on fertilisers and soil conditioners the following substances have been included: biogas digestate, hydrolysed proteins of animal by-product origin, Leonardite, chitin and sapropel.
- In Annex II on plant protection products sheep fat, laminarin and aluminium silicate (Kaolin) have been included. In the same Annex gelatine, rotenone extracted from *Derris spp.* and *Lonchocarpus spp.* and *Terphrosia spp.*, diammonium phosphate, copper octanoate, potassium aluminium (aluminium sulphate, kalinite), mineral oils and potassium permanganate have been deleted and information for plant oils, micro-organisms, pheromones, copper, ethylene, paraffin oil and potassium bicarbonate have been adapted.
- In Annex V on feed materials, two products that were incorrectly omitted previously - defluorinated monocalciumphosphate and defluorinated dicalciumphosphate – have been reinserted.
- In Annex VI on feed additives an adaptation to the entry on Clinoptilolite has been applied.

EGTOP REPORT ON AQUACULTURE

On 1 April 2014, the recommendations of the Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Production (EGTOP) on aquaculture were published. Two main topics have been examined: the use of non-organic juveniles, and permitted feed sources and feed additives, with a special focus on histidine, cholesterol and lecithin. A second report on other aspects of aquaculture is expected to be delivered in the second half of 2014.

EU PARLIAMENT APPROVES NEGOTIATING POSITION ON OFFICIAL CONTROLS

During the Strasbourg plenary session of 15 April 2014, the European Parliament approved its negotiating position on the Commission’s proposal on official controls for food and feed. IFOAM EU’s position was transmitted to the Members of the Parliament before the votes with a key focus on taking into account the specificity of control activities in the organic sector. The report led by the European Parliament ENVI committee will now be submitted to the other EU Institutions, with political negotiations between the European Parliament, Council and Commission expected to begin.

IFOAM EU ORGANIC PROCESSOR MEETING HELD IN BRISTOL

On 25 and 26 March 2014 IFOAM EU experts on organic processing met in the Soil Association premises in Bristol (UK). Many topics were discussed including a deep analysis of the Commission proposal for a new Organic Regulation. The IFOAM EU interest group on processing meets 2–3 times a year and a lot of ‘homework’ is done between the meetings. All IFOAM EU positions on organic processing originate from the work of this group of experts.
AHEAD OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS

ASK YOUR MEP CANDIDATES WHAT THEY STAND FOR!

Between 22 and 25 May European citizens have the chance of electing their representatives for the European Parliament. These new parliamentarians will be shaping crucial policies for Europe. Ahead of the election, a number of campaigns have been launched to make the candidate MEPs pledge for a specific cause that they should implement if they are elected.

One project called Politics for People has been created by the Alliance for Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Regulation. Their main goal is to make MEP candidates sign a pledge that binds them to support citizens’ rights through democratic procedures if elected. Each citizen can choose their country from an interactive map and can send a letter to their prospective MEPs to sign the pledge.

Another example is a project created by the Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe. To see how parliamentarians from the current Parliament have voted on climate change issues CAN Europe has compiled scorecards that illustrate the positions of national political parties on climate change and energy and how they relate to EU decision-making. MEP candidates are invited to sign a climate pledge, committing them to tackling climate change throughout their term in office if elected.

Specifically on agriculture, with the legislation on the marketing of seed and plant reproductive material also to be decided during the next Parliament, numerous initiatives in Member States are asking MEP candidates about their willingness to vote and work for seed legislation that favours biodiversity and farmers’ rights. For more information, please contact antje.koelling[at]ifoam-eu.org

CAP

CAP DELEGATED ACTS EXPECTED TO WEAKEN PILLAR 1 GREENING EVEN FURTHER

Agriculture Ministers and MEPs have ratified delegated acts on CAP reform that could weaken the implementation of Pillar 1 greening of direct payments even further. This follows the adoption of a special declaration on the delegated acts by the Commission on 2 April. The declaration sought to satisfy the demands of members of the European Parliament AGRI committee who wanted to see no restrictions for the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilisers if protein crops are cultivated on areas dedicated as ecological focus areas (EFAs).

Following ratification by the AGRI Council and the European Parliament, the Commission must now table an amendment to the delegated act on direct payments expected to take place in Autumn 2014. The amendment would also follow the standard delegated act procedure with a 2-month right of rejection by the European Parliament and the AGRI Council.

IFOAM EU calls on policy makers to enhance agro-ecological solutions, not support agrochemicals

In an open letter to the European Commission and the Greek EU Presidency 11 NGOs including IFOAM EU called on the EU and national leaders to ensure that the CAP delegated acts and implementation of new Rural Development Programmes enhances agro-ecological solutions, rather than support agrochemicals. Key demands outlined by the coalition of farming, environmental, development, consumer and public health groups included:

• Prohibiting the use of agrochemicals on ecological focus areas (EFAs) under Pillar 1 greening by putting in place an EU-wide ban
• Not favouring the cultivation of nitrogen-fixing crops over other landscape features on EFAs
• Ensuring a strong commitment from Member States to invest in advanced sustainability measures such as organic farming and agri-environment-climate measures under new Rural Development programmes (RDPs)
• A guarantee that Member States are able to demonstrate to the Commission that there is no roll back on the positive RDP environmental and socio-economic outcomes resulting from past reforms.

IFOAM EU will continue to monitor the process over the coming weeks and months. For updates please follow the thinkingCAP blog, for more information please contact Stephen Meredith: stephen.meredith[at]ifoam-eu.org
REVISED EU PROMOTIONAL POLICY COULD INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ORGANICS

New legislation on information provision and promotion measures will increase EU funding opportunities for initiatives for publicising EU agricultural products on the internal market and in third countries from 2016. This follows the European Parliament’s adoption of a provisional agreement reached by EU Institution negotiators at plenary in Strasbourg on 15 April.

The provisional agreement has also been ratified in the AGRI Council. The budget for such initiatives will increase gradually over the next five years from a current annual fund of €60m per year to €200m annually by 2020.

A strong emphasis is placed on multi-country and export-led campaigns which have seen limited uptake under current programming. EU financing contributions will increase to 70% for products on the internal market; 80% for multi-product programmes targeted at the internal market and third countries; and 85% for programmes responding to crisis events in the EU.

Commission figures show that between 2000 and 2010 EU funds for organic campaigns represented only 8% of the current budget.

The new legislation covers:

- Products recognised under quality schemes e.g. organic. It also includes other products such as cotton and sweet corn.
- Spirits and wine with a protected geographical indication (PGI) as well as beer under certain conditions. These products are eligible when promoted alongside other products
- All so called “Annex 1 products” – listed under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFUE)
- Fishery and aquaculture products when promoted alongside other products
- National quality schemes referred under the new Rural Development Regulation.

New campaigns must increase awareness of organic production

In a press statement IFOAM EU welcomed the revised legislation on information and promotion policies in presenting new opportunities to promote organic food and farming, but highlighted the missed opportunity by EU leaders to better use EU promotional policy to support and incentivise organic production. It called on policymakers to use the new legislation to build on the recommendations of the EU Organic Action Plan and put in place a dedicated budget for organic farming under the new policy and complementary CAP instruments. The final legislation is expected to be published in the second half of 2014 with the new legislation coming into force by the beginning of 2016.

MAIN RESULTS OF COMMISSION FAMILY FARMING CONFERENCE PUBLISHED

2014 is the UN International Year of Family Farming. In November 2013 the European Commission held a conference on “Family Farming: A dialogue towards more sustainable and resilient farming in Europe and the world” in Brussels. It was attended by an IFOAM EU delegation including farming member associations from Belgium, France and the UK. The European Commission has now published a booklet outlining the main results of the conference. Further information about the event can be found on the conference website. More information about IFOAM’s global activities on family farming for 2014 can be found here.
GET YOUR COPY OF “ORGANIC IN EUROPE”

Don’t miss your opportunity to get a copy of “Organic in Europe: Prospects and Developments” – a new book from IFOAM EU, FiBL and CIHEAM-IAMB. Organic in Europe highlights the potential of EU organic food and farming to develop and expand if the new CAP is implemented in an effective way and supports greener and fairer farming across Europe. The book also outlines the latest trends for Organic in Europe, showing that the sector made increases in organic agricultural land, producers and the market in 2012. The publication, part of IFOAM EU’s Mind the CAP campaign, looks at the latest trends in EU public policy and market development across Europe including:

» An overview of the latest policy developments in the EU to 2020 from the reform of the CAP 2014–202 and the potential for organic sector research and innovation under the new EU Research Framework Horizon and the European Innovation Partnership to the EU Organic Regulation review

» Analyses of policy in action from case studies on current and future EU rural development programming in EU member states and regions to the contribution of organic action plans for sector development

Facts and figures on latest farming and market trends including national reports on current status and developments of the organic sector across Europe

Organic in Europe is now available to order on the IFOAM Bookstore. For a snapshot of book and the latest content please visit our Organic in Europe webpage

New publication from IFOAM EU, FiBL and CIHEAM-IAMB

- Latest growth trends
- Europe-wide production & sales statistics, including per country
- Farming and food policy overview
- Case studies on support mechanisms

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**SUSTAINABLE BIOGAS ON ORGANIC FARMS DISCUSSED IN EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

“Sustainable Biogas Production on Organic farms - a contribution to reach the “20-20-20” renewable target and to increase organic food production” was the title of the stakeholder roundtable organised by IFOAM EU in the framework of the SUSTAINGAS project on 8 April in the European Parliament. MEP Martin Häusling from the Greens/EFA Group, Emilio Font de Mora, Project Officer from the EU Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises EASME and Marco Schlüter, IFOAM EU director, opened the event and introduced the subject of Sustainable Biogas. Frank Hofmann from ECOFYS – a renewable energy consultancy group – presented results of the sustainability analysis for biogas plants in organic agriculture conducted as part of the SUSTAINGAS project. Florian Gerlach, from the Research Institute for Organic Farming – FiBL, explained what role the political framework could play to encourage investments in sustainable biogas plants. This was followed by a presentation from the point of view of a practitioner - Gerhard Moser, an organic farmer and an owner of a biogas plant - who demonstrated the advantages of biogas for his farm and argued how biogas can contribute in reaching the 20-20-20 target set out in the EU’s 2020 climate and energy package. He also gave a practical insight into biogas plants and some of the difficulties he faced. The presentations were followed by a debate among the panel, experts and the audience that showed great interest in the issue.
A workshop on “Production of Sustainable Biogas in mixed crop and livestock farms” took place 14 March in Silleda, Pontevedra, Spain at the Galician Agriculture fair GandAgro 2014. The workshop was organised within the project SUSTAINGAS by one of the partners PROTECMA (Fernando Garcia). The workshop was one of several regional workshops that has been going on within the project and was targeted towards the transfer the knowledge generated, collected and concentrated on the progress of project training for organic farmers, biogas consultants and associations, green energy companies etc.

Around 35 people in total took part, starting in the morning with sessions focused on organic farming and its potential for development in Spain and in Europe, with speakers from the Spanish Society for Organic Farming – SEAE (Xan Neira), IFOAM EU (Josefine Johansson), Craega – a certification body (Ernesto Sanchez) and Guillermo Martinez Ruiz, from an organic dairy farm - Casa Grande de Xanceda. The afternoon sessions focused on bio gas production with Fernando Garcia from Protecma presenting the results and progress of the SUSTAINGAS project. This was followed by Luis Puchades from Ludan Renewable Energy Europe who talked about the ongoing project to build a biogas plant on an organic vegetable farm - Kernel export. Further examples of biogas plants in Galicia and new technical innovations within biogas were also presented followed by wider discussion on sustainable biogas. The participants were very engaged and interested in the SUSTAINGAS project and had a lot of questions for the speakers.

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REVISED DATES FOR FARMERS INTEREST GROUP MEETING – Brussels 26–27 June

You may have read in the March edition of our newsletter that the IFOAM EU Farmers’ Interest Group is going to meet in this summer. Please be advised that the dates have been revised and the meeting will now take place in Brussels from 26–27 June. The event is organised in association with Bioforum Flanders and will look at the potential of the Rural Development Programmes (RDP) under the CAP 2014–2020 with a special focus on the new Rural Development cooperation measure and how organic farmers can get the most out of it to build capacities. The meeting will also comprise of an excursion to a number of Belgian farms and enterprises on 26 June and with a conference style meeting on 27 June which will also include other topics of concern for organic farmers.

More information will be available soon. If you would like to join the meeting, please contact stephen.meredith[at]ifoam-eu.org or speak with your IFOAM EU Farmer’s Interest Group representative from your farming association.
CLIMATE CHANGE

ITALIAN FARMERS READY TO START WITH CLIMATE FRIENDLY FARMING PRACTICES

The first SOLMACC* farmers from Sicily, Tuscany, Veneto and Lazio received their initial training on 26 March at a training day in Rome organised by the Italian Association of Organic Agriculture (AIAB). All farmers reported that climate change is already impacting their farms and stated that they are keen to test and demonstrate climate friendly practices that can make their farms and agriculture less of a climate change contributor as well as more resilient to its effects. Optimised crop rotation, nutrient recycling, tillage and agroforestry are some of the practices that will be applied in the coming four years by the Italian farmers as well as eight of their colleagues in Sweden and Germany. Each of the participating farms will cooperate closely with a team of scientists and advisors and work out farm management plans that are fine-tuned according to the respective conditions of each farm. From 2015 onwards the farms will open their gates to share their experiences with the agricultural community and the general public.

* SOLMACC stands for “Strategies for organic and low-input farming to mitigate and adapt to climate change” and is supported by the Life Programme of the European Commission. It will run from 2013 to 2018. Partners are IFOAM EU, AIAB Italy, Ekologiska Lantbrukarna Sweden, Bioland Beratung Germany and FiBL Germany. A website will be launched shortly.

IPCC ANALYSIS: IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON FOOD AND FARMING

This April an analysis of findings of the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was released focusing on climate change, food security and small-scale producers. The analysis reveals that undoubtedly climate change is impacting on food security for everyone, especially in developing countries. Availability of food, access to food, utilisation of food and stability of food supplies over time are all being affected. Global net yields of maize and wheat appear to be negatively impacted. Price spikes following extreme climate events affect consumers who are linked to international food markets. The analysis also refers to the nutritional quality and safety of food that is being influenced by climate change. The analysis also looks ahead to impacts and adaptations in the 2030s and 2050s respectively.

Find the analysis here.
**1.3 EU RESEARCH & INNOVATION POLICY/TP ORGANICS**

TP ORGANICS STAKEHOLDER FORUM 2014 – 1 July 2014, Tuscany Region Liaison Office, 13.00–17.30 hours, Brussels, Belgium

*Revising the Strategic Research Agenda for Organic Food and Farming*

This year the TP Organics Stakeholder Forum is dedicated to the revision of TP Organics’ Strategic Research Agenda. The new Agenda will list the research and innovation goals for organic until 2020 with preparations by experts already beginning in January 2014. This event will be the first opportunity for members and stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft. Your contribution will help to make the Strategic Research Agenda a broadly supported document that effectively can influence EU research policy.

In addition the Stakeholder Forum will feature the launch of TP Organics’ Action Plan for Innovation and Learning. This Action Plan will demonstrate the innovation potential of organic farming and agro-ecology and make policy recommendations for promoting innovation and learning in agriculture.

The number of seats is limited to 50 and therefore priority will be given to the members of TP Organics.

Be quick and **register now!**

**Read the draft programme**

EXPOMILANO 2015: DEADLINE FOR FEEDING KNOWLEDGE PROGRAM POSTPONED TO 15 SEPTEMBER

Expo Milano 2015 has launched a call aimed at the recognition and promotion of “Best Sustainable Development Practices on Food Security”. The call is addressed to initiatives carried out in different parts of the world related to the theme of Expo Milano 2015 “Feeding the planet, Energy for life”.

The Feeding Knowledge Program has been built on the idea that knowledge development and sharing are the main tools to identify concrete solutions for food security that really meet the needs of developing countries. The programme is based on the idea to achieve sustainable development with the aim that everyone on the planet has access to healthy, safe and sufficient food.

The call is aimed at recognising and promoting the visibility of best practices in policy, technology, services and products as well as other areas related to the theme.

The deadline for the Proposals submission has been now postponed to 15 **September 2014**

Improve food security! Share your experience!

**Find more information here**
2 EVENTS

2.1 PREVIEW OF EVENTS

8TH EUROPEAN ORGANIC CONGRESS
Bari, Italy, 11–12 September 2014

Implementing innovative ecological solutions for farmers and rural communities

Rural Development Programmes – European Innovation Partnership – Organic Regulation Review

Share your views and learn about experiences from all over Europe and beyond at the 8th European Organic Congress – Register Now! Take advantage of the Early Bird Rate (20% off the normal fee) until 20 May!

Member States and regions will launch the Rural Development Programmes of the new EU Common Agricultural Policy in 2015. What will be the impact on farmers and rural communities throughout Europe? How can the new programmes stimulate greater delivery of public goods and green job creation?

The European Innovation Partnership for Agriculture (EIP-AGRI) aims to bring rural development, farming and research together. It presents many opportunities and can be used to put eco-functional intensification at the heart of the EU productivity and sustainability objectives. How will this new policy instrument be implemented? How can organic and agro-ecological approaches contribute to its development?

The new Rural Development Regulation offers the potential for greater recognition for organic farming, yet the sector faces the prospect of considerable regulatory changes in the coming years. How can the new Organic Regulation help make Europe more organic and drive innovation for sustainable food production?

Check out also the programme for the excursion on 12 September (after the Congress) to Altamura – complimentary for all Congress delegates.

9TH ORGANIC MARKETING FORUM
1–2 June, Warsaw, Poland

Under the theme “Marketing strategies for the organic sector,” European organic traders, processors and raw material producers will meet at the 9th Organic Marketing Forum on 1–2 June 2014 in Warsaw.

Much of the focus of this international exhibition and organic conference will be on setting up new markets, finding new marketing strategies and making new business contacts. With more than 350 professional participants expected from about 30 countries, the Organic Marketing Forum will be the most important international business meeting for the organic sector in Central and Eastern Europe.

IFOAM EU and the Polish Ministry for Agriculture are patrons of the event.

Registration and more information can be found here.
Implementing Innovative Ecological Solutions for Farmers and Rural Communities

10–12 SEPTEMBER 2014, BARI, ITALY

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THE SUSTAINABLE FOODS SUMMIT 2014
5–6 June, Amsterdam, Netherlands

The Sustainable Foods Summit is a series of international summits that focuses on the leading issues the food industry faces, concerning sustainability and eco-labels such as Organic, Fair Trade, Rainforest Alliance, etc. The aim of the Sustainable Foods Summit is to explore new horizons for eco-labels and sustainability in the food industry.

Like previous events, the summit will address such questions in a high-level forum.

Organised by Organic Monitor, the summit brings together key stakeholders in the food industry to debate these major issues in a high-level forum.

For further information:
www.sustainablefoodssummit.com
Email: info@sustainablefoodssummit.com
If you are interested in attending or exhibiting at the NATURA FOOD & beEco fair, please visit their website at www.naturafood.pl or www.beeco.com.pl.

**October 3-5, 2014 Lodz, Poland**

**NATURA FOOD & beEco Are:**
- The main exhibition of organic, regional, and low processed food and non-food products in Poland.
- The only event with a wide range of organic cosmetics, cleaning materials, textiles, packaging materials, household appliances, diet supplements, herbal medicines.
- An annual meeting of organic food non-food market participants including farmers, manufacturers, distributors and wholesalers as well as their supporting institutions and companies.
- An opportunity for direct contact with companies active on the Polish market of organic products.
- An extensive schedule of conferences and sector meetings.

**NATURA FOOD & beEco Are Dedicated To:**
- Organic food and non-food distributors and wholesalers.
- Owners of organic, green and high-quality food shops.
- Canteens, restaurant owners, barkeeps and catering firms.
- Farmers, processors and makers of organic, regional and low processed food products.
- Organic entrepreneurs, organic food market actors.
- Consumers of high-quality food products.

**Facts & Figures About 2013 NF&BE Edition:**
- Over 300 exhibitors.
- Nearly 12,000 visitors from 8 countries (Hungarian, German, Czech Republic, Great Britain, Italy, Lithuanian, Ukraine, Bulgaria).
- About 1000 conference participants.
- 20% increase in exhibitors, visitors and exhibition space.

**Benefits From Participating In NF&BE Fair Are:**
- Establishing direct business contacts with Polish producers of organic, traditional and regional food.
- Promoting products on the Polish market.
- Meeting competitors.
- Identifying customer expectations on the Polish market.
- Attracting new business partners and customers.
IFOAM EU: What is the situation of the organic sector in Spain, particularly in Andalusia?

Évelyne Alcázar Marín: Between 2002 and 2005 organic farming in Spain was continuously growing. Currently, however, growth is becoming less pronounced than in previous years. According to the latest published statistics (2012) Spain is the fifth country in the world in terms of area and the first in Europe. It is among the top 10 in terms of the number of operators worldwide. Compared to the whole of Spain, Andalusia accounts for more than half the country’s total organic farmland area and operators. It has one of the largest markets – 998 million euro in 2012. In that sense it has been expanding in recent years.

What are the main target markets and which organic products stand out for their quality?

All markets recognise the high quality of Spanish organic products, especially olive oil, wine and vegetables. Although not produced in large quantities, subtropical produce from Andalusia also has great quality recognition in many markets. The key markets for Spanish organic products are Germany, France, British and the United States.

What are the main problems facing the Spanish sector at the moment?

I think the biggest challenge will be the establishment of the new Organic Regulation, there are still many questions to be answered and the sector will take positions to ensure that its implementation is not carried out in an inappropriate manner or impedes on its current development. We are organising roundtables to collect information and opinions regarding the changes to the EU Organic Regulation in order to forward them to appropriate institutions. The activities organized by Ecovalia are always focused on responding to the needs of the sector and this is an example.

Can you describe some the activities undertaken by Ecovalia this first quarter?

Since the beginning of the year we have organized 26 activities. Most of them were courses and trainings; from introduction to organic farming to specific trainings on crop production, such as pistachio and cranberry. Other courses included topics related to livestock and were supported under the PASTOREA project which aims to develop livestock value chains. We also organised two farmers’ markets to encourage and foster local businesses. We organised ECOTRAMA – the 13th edition of an annual international award for organic olive oil.

In the coming months, we will:

- continue to engage in work on organic farming in Spain;
- develop partnerships (with regional authorities and research centres);
- issue publications;
- work on establishing an information centre;
- we will organise activities with the first academic Chair for organic livestock in Spain that was also created by Ecovalia;
- hold an international wine awards “ECORACIMO” ceremony;
- continue to engage in multiple collaborations and activities with other associations, public agencies and private entities.

What is “Plan Formativo 2013/2014” and what are its objectives?

Ecovalia wants to contribute to the development of an organic sector that is characterised by continuous change. We believe that training is an appropriate way to respond to these changes and that is why we created the Training Plan 2013/2014. We offer different types of courses, on-line, face-to-face – customized for businesses, cooperatives, etc – to facilitate the participation of all stakeholders, professionals, consumers or any person with concerns about organic production. We have extensive experience in training and we have experts with different areas of knowledge. Therefore we hope that this plan will strengthen organisations engaged in many areas important to the sector from the environment and the organic food industry more generally to quality management and marketing and sales. We consider these initiatives important for the professional capacity of organic sector.

How would you describe your collaboration with IFOAM EU?

Ecovalia strongly believes in the importance of the work of IFOAM EU to advocate for the organic sector. It fortunately has a well organised staff that demonstrates huge commitment. For these reasons it is imperative that we contribute with other IFOAM EU members and partners to develop its work and activities. This is what motivates Ecovalia to sponsor IFOAM EU and contribute to the discussions, as well as to provide information and support in every way it can.
IFOAM EU KEY SPONSORS 2014

The contributions of sponsors allow IFOAM EU to focus on its most important work – representing organic stakeholders. This funding is a means to co-finance IFOAM EU events, projects and publications and is a highly valued contribution to our work.

A DECADE OF ORGANIC ADVOCACY IN BRUSSELS

“This anniversary publication gives a voice to our people; each contribution gives a personal perspective on how IFOAM EU has played a part in developing and delivering a common vision for organic, influencing public and business policy as well as personal practice. They speak of how our ethos is expressed in our daily lives, how the ethics of our standards and codes of conduct brings food from our farmers and growers to our tables.”

Christopher Stopes
IFOAM EU President

EIP DOSSIER - POLISH VERSION AVAILABLE!

The dossier European Innovation Partnership – Opportunities for Innovation in Organic Farming and Agroecology”, launched at the Science Day of BioFach is now available in Polish. The joint publication from IFOAM EU, TP Organics and ARC2020 is there to help the organic sector and the agro-ecological community to understand the implementation of this new policy instrument. The dossier explains the EIP-AGRI activities at EU level and the importance of the work that has to be done under the new Rural Development Programmes at national or regional level. It also features a number of interesting initiatives in Member States and an overview of the wide range of innovations with which the organic sector can contribute to the EIP-AGRI.

Let’s ensure that the EIP-AGRI is used effectively so that we are learning from each other! Find links to the three available versions below:

French version
English version
Polish version

3 MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC – SUPPORT IFOAM EU
Organic Potato starch is produced in accordance with the European Union’s rules on organic farming and by the two well-known potato experts, Finnamyl Oy and Aloja Stärkelse S/A.

The full cycle from seed potatoes, starch potato cultivation and organic potato starch processing in Finland and Latvia is managed by well-experienced professionals.

Potato starch is a natural food ingredient traditionally used in Europe. Our customers are entitled to full application support service.

Organic Potato Starch

**BENEFITS**
- A safe product with a clean taste
- A fully allergen-free product
- Provides high-viscous transparent gel
- Enables cost savings
- Is an EU-origin product

**APPLICATIONS**
- For desserts, puddings, soups, gravies and meat products
- For baked and pasta products, and for coatings
- For dry blends, instant meals and confectionery

Both native and cold-swelling (pre-gel) starch are available. Native starch is mechanically extracted from organic potatoes. Cold-swelling starch is produced by precooking native starch, drying it on steam-heated drums, as well as grounding and sieving.
**4 IFOAM EU STAFF NEWS**

**Athanasia Champidi**
*Former Regulation volunteer*

Athanasia’s year-long experience in IFOAM EU ended this month. Her background in agriculture and her former experience as organic inspector in Greece were of fundamental importance for her role as a volunteer in the regulation area and provided a good foundation in her ongoing professional development. We would like to thank her for her help in the preparatory work for our position paper, for her assistance in the organisation of events and conferences and in particular for the good humour she brought to the IFOAM EU office. We wish her all the best in her future activities.

**Effimia Chatzinikolaou**
*New Policy trainee*

Effimia has joined IFOAM EU as a policy trainee until the end of August. Having completed an MA in Environment, Politics and Globalisation, she spent most of her life in Athens, Greece - a city that faces some serious environmental problems: “I realised that I needed to combine politics and environmental science in order to make a change through my work. Looking to acquire experience in the field, I completed a traineeship in the European Parliament Office in Greece. Now as a trainee in IFOAM EU, I am looking forward to working in a multicultural environment and gaining practical experience in the policy process. In addition, I am highly interested in learning more about organic agriculture best practices and how these can be used to improve environmental issues that the EU faces.”
## 5 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>1–2 June</td>
<td>Organic Marketing Forum</td>
<td>Warsaw, Poland</td>
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<td>5–6 June</td>
<td>Sustainable Foods Summit 2014</td>
<td>Amsterdam, Netherlands</td>
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<td>26–27 June</td>
<td>IFOAM EU Farmers Interest Group Meeting</td>
<td>Brussels, Belgium</td>
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<td>10–12 Sept</td>
<td>8th European Organic Congress</td>
<td>Bari, Italy</td>
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<td>3–5 Oct</td>
<td>Natura Food 2014</td>
<td>Lodz, Poland</td>
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<td>13–15 Oct</td>
<td>18th IFOAM Organic World Congress</td>
<td>Istanbul, Turkey</td>
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<td>17–18 Nov</td>
<td>3rd IFOAM EU Organic Processing Conference</td>
<td>Paris, France</td>
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### THE IFOAM ORGANIC LEADERSHIP COURSE (OLC) EUROPE 2014
First residential session: 12–21 July 2014 in the Netherlands

Do not miss this unique opportunity to develop your skills, knowledge and leadership attitude. The IFOAM OLC brings international expertise and vision to a course that will help you attain your personal development goals. Applications are currently being accepted. The deadline is 15 April, so follow the instructions on the OLC Europe page and apply.

Find out more about the leadership course.

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This newsletter exists to inform IFOAM EU members about the work of the IFOAM EU Group and its liaison and coordination office in Brussels. IFOAM EU is the European Regional Group of the worldwide umbrella organisation IFOAM and is responsible for all matters related to organic farming with a Europe-wide scope.

[www.ifoam-eu.org](http://www.ifoam-eu.org)

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Please send any comments or contributions to the newsletter to communication [at] ifoam-eu.org.

For further information contact your national board member or the office in Brussels.

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The IFOAM EU Group acknowledges the financial support of the European Union, DG Environment throughout the year 2014. The sole responsibility lies with the IFOAM EU Group, and the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided by IFOAM EU Group.

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IFOAM EU Climate Change Chief Coordinator Lena Wietheger (third person from the left) held a session on volunteering for (some already former) participants of the European Voluntary Service at IFOAM EU office: Laura Maeso (Spain), Marie-Chiara Tort (France), Asta Donielaite (Lithuania), Ivan Marko Stazic (Croatia), Athanasia Champidi (Greece) © Ann-Kathrin Trappenberg