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As the representative for organic processing and trade to the IFOAM EU Board, it is my great pleasure to invite you to the 4th Organic Processing Conference, the European event dedicated to organic food processing innovation and development. It is a unique opportunity for organic business leaders to meet, network, and explore new initiatives in our rapidly developing sector.

Food consumption is changing and organic is leading the way. With annual growth in Europe of 6–7% and mainstream supermarkets continually adding more and more organic products to their shelves, there is no doubt organic plays a major role in the food & farming transformation. Organic trade and processing also have a key role to play in the development of supply chain, especially concerning fairness, integrity and transparency. From new tools that ensure integrity from the farm to the factory, to practical examples of approaches to price negotiation and supply-chain partnership.

Market trends, innovative operational approaches and EU policies that will impact market growth – such as the EU initiatives on Green Public Procurement – and drive the reduction of greenhouse gases in the production chain – such as the Product Environmental Footprint – will be in the spotlight too. There will also be ample time to discuss the new organic regulation which is currently being discussed by the EU institutions and its potential impact for processing and trade.

Joining organic business leaders on 24–25 November 2016 in Seville for the 4th Organic Processing Conference will allow you to:

- Network with high-level organic leaders and policy-makers
- Exchange on topics that will shape the future of organic
- Get informed on the latest organic supply chain developments, market trends & EU policies
- Be inspired by fellow sector representatives.

The previous edition brought together 150 leaders with CEOs and senior management of organic companies representing more than half of the participants; high-level policy makers and certification representatives were also in large attendance.

The Organic Processing Conference is a unique opportunity to meet with your peers as organic leaders and I would like to welcome you and encourage you to join the conversation.

Looking forward to seeing you in Seville,

Bavo van den Idsert
IFOAM EU Board Member & Sector rapporteur for processing and trade

PS: By the way, the conference place takes place in Sevilla, one of the pearls among Spain’s many cities. Take this opportunity to visit it!

“Organic is the sustainability food champion and aims to remain so”
Bavo van den Idsert at the 3rd Organic Processing Conference in 2014
4TH ORGANIC PROCESSING CONFERENCE

24 - 25 NOVEMBER 2016
Seville, Spain

- Organic innovation
- Supply chain
- Market trends
- EU Policies

Registration, programme and additional information: organicfoodprocessing.eu

Want to see your logo here and at the event? Get in touch to find out how
POLITICAL HOTSPOT

CORK 2.0: A EUROPEAN VISION FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD AND FARMING?

In Brussels and across the EU, discussions on the current state of the Common Agricultural Policy and the next reform have been heating up. It was therefore timely that the European Commission would bring together 350 stakeholders from across Europe for a 2-day conference in the Irish city of Cork, with the aim or setting out their ideas for the future of EU agriculture and rural development.

The conference date was exactly 20 years after the first Cork Declaration “A living countryside” was agreed in 1996. As in almost all discussions on the future of EU farm policy, there were differences between those who call for a paradigm shift empowering both farmers and citizens and those who continue to promote short-term policy fixes. However, the Cork 2.0 Declaration – “A Better Life in Rural Areas” – issued at the close of the conference notably saw stakeholders agreeing that the future should be about an “innovative, integrated and inclusive rural and agricultural policy”.

In particular, there was a strong emphasis on the need to “incentivise the delivery of environmental public goods” and targeted climate actions that “go beyond carbon-based solutions” and “promote sound nutrient and livestock management. More significantly, these priorities were singled out by Agriculture Commissioner Phil Hogan in a statement that Cork 2.0 provides “a blueprint for the policy priorities we need to identify in the coming months and years”.

While it is good to see the Commissioner stating his intentions to use Cork 2.0 as the foundations for future policy reform, there was a lot in Cork 1.0 that didn’t reach its potential. What is clearly needed now is a strong political commitment to work with all stakeholders towards a fundamental change of the existing policy framework that turns the nice words set out in the Declaration into reality. Such a call for fundamental change is also set out in a recent paper authored by Karl Falkenberg, Senior Adviser for Sustainable Development to the President of the European Commission, entitled Sustainability Now! A European Vision for Sustainability (see the CAP section of this newsletter for further details).

Nevertheless, the temptation to respond to growing demands to address slumps in commodity prices through short-term policy fixes such as income stabilisation and other risk management approaches is becoming ever greater as the crises in agriculture pile up. But bandages hide the wound and very often serve vested interests within an ever industrialised food system.

The EU should not reinforce an industrial system that forces farmers to get big or get out. It should not place the private profits of the few big operators over the social, health and environmental concerns of all citizens.

With thousands of farmers subject to continuous market volatility and the costs for public health care and environmental clean-up resulting from industrial food and farming skyrocketing, it is clear that a CAP largely based around the sale of high-volume, low-cost output is not working. The CAP represents 40% of taxpayers’ contribution to the EU budget. It is urgent that EU spending be directed away from business as usual and moved towards helping farmers enhance their long-term economic and environmental sustainability on their own farms and for society.

Turning the expectations of Cork 1.0, reaffirmed in Cork 2.0, into reality will be hard work. Together with friends working to transform food and farming, the organic movement will continue to take part in the conversation on the future of food and farming policy.
1 NEWS FROM IFOAM EU WORKING FIELDS

1.1 REGULATION

REGULATION UPDATE

Since July 2016, the Council (steered by the Slovak Presidency), the Parliament and the Commission have intensively worked on the organic dossier with the aim of adopting a final text by the end of 2016. Two trilogue meetings took place in September and October and another three meetings are planned by the end of the year.

The areas discussed by the three EU institutions in the first semester of 2016 – import, control system and the actions to be taken in case of residue findings in organic products – have not been re-discussed so far under the Slovak Presidency. The three institutions are now focusing on the production rules for crops and livestock.

IFOAM EU is continually following the process and pushing for a new regulation with an added value that would, for example:

- The availability of organic seed and propagating material must be increased and national databases for tracking the availability of organic seed must be strengthened. National lists of species/subspecies for which derogation is not possible must be made available through the databases.
- Further improve the environmental performance of organic processors and traders, while avoiding additional bureaucratic burden especially for the smallest operators. The Parliament and the Commission are quite in agreement with IFOAM EU on this approach.
- Improve the labelling and in particular consistency concerning the origin of ingredients, as the Parliament proposed in its opinion.

As the organic regulation is highly complex and detailed, it is important that the final text both improves on the existing regulation and that can be applied practically. The three institutions should therefore pay significant attention to the details as these can heavily impact the everyday implementation for organic operators in and outside the EU.

Since 2012, IFOAM EU has been continuously involved in the review process and continues to propose solutions to the three EU institutions.

NEW EGTOP REPORT ON AQUACULTURE

On the basis of a mandate from the European Commission to work on aquaculture, the Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Production (EGTOP) recently issued recommendations on the dietary needs of shrimp and on the practice of zooplankton bioencapsulation. The previous report on aquaculture was published in 2014.

EGTOP recommendations are not binding but the Commission should take them into consideration when updating the organic legislation.

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NEW IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS


On 19 October 2016, new Regulation (EU) No 2016/1842 was published providing significant amendments to and clarifying some requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008.

In particular:

- The deadline for control bodies wanting to operate outside the EU and be recognised for the purpose of compliance was again postponed, now from 31 October 2016 to 31 October 2017
- A clear indication on how to categorise processed and unprocessed products has been defined
- A system of electronic certification for imported organic products has been developed and will be applied from 19 April 2017. For a transitional period lasting until 19 October 2017, its use will not be mandatory
- The new system is integrated into the Commission’s existing electronic Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES)
- Other important clarifications for the harmonisation of practices in the import processes are provided

This infographic is part of a series of infographics available on Twitter and Facebook in English, French, German, Italian, Polish and Spanish. Do share using #OrganicDelivers!
1.2 POLICY

**GMOs**

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT OBJECTS TO FIVE NEW GMO AUTHORIZATIONS

On 6 October, a clear majority of Members of the European Parliament voted to oppose five new GMO authorizations (three GMOs for cultivation and two for import, food and feed). IFOAM EU wrote a letter to MEPs to urge them to oppose these new authorizations and welcomed this vote. This is the fifth time in a year that the European Parliament has objected to the approval of GMOs in line with the wishes of EU citizens for a GMO-free agriculture.

However, these objections do not block the process of authorisation, as the Parliament vote is not binding.

In November, Member States will vote on whether or not to authorize these five GMOs. It is now time for Member States to be coherent with their national bans and vote against these authorizations, in particular for cultivation. Since the adoption of the so-called “opt out” directive allowing Member States to adopt national policies blocking the cultivation of GMOs on their territories which are authorised at EU level, 17 Member States and four regions have banned the cultivation of GMOs.

Every new GMO authorization is a threat to the organic farming and to the GMO-free sectors; it heightens the risk of contamination and significantly increases the costs of remaining GMO-free. The efforts of the European organic and conventional food sectors to remain GMO-free would be jeopardised if new GMOs are authorised for cultivation in the EU. Mr Juncker should instead fulfill his pledge to reform the undemocratic EU authorisation system for GMOs.

INCOMPLETE EFSA OPINION ON TEOSINTE SHOULD NOT STOP MEMBER STATES FROM OPPOSING NEW GMO CULTIVATION

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) was mandated by the Commission to give an opinion on the impact of the introduction in Europe of teosinte on the risk assessment of four GM maize events for cultivation (MON810, Bt11, 1507 and GA21). Teosinte is an invasive species originating in Central America, considered to be the ancestor of modern cultivated maize, which has been spreading in Spain and France for several years. There is a risk that teosinte could breed with transgenic maize in the fields, producing plants that could become a serious problem to eliminate.

At the beginning of October, the EFSA opinion on teosinte was released. Unsurprisingly it concludes that the spread of teosinte in Europe does not require a new risk management evaluation, even though crucial data for risk assessment are largely missing: the possible adverse repercussions and knowledge of how to control teosinte are not well known.

It is IFOAM EU, together with a coalition of farmers and environmental groups, that alerted Spanish authorities and the Commission on the need to take action to prevent crossbreeding of teosinte with GM maize.

This incomplete EFSA opinion demonstrates once again the need to improve EFSA’s risk assessment procedure.

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**MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC**
ENDING PATENTS ON LIFE: COMMISSION LEGAL INTERPRETATION EXPECTED THIS YEAR

In the EU, it used to be that different kinds of industrial property rights covered different areas: patents were used for industrial invention and plant variety rights were used to protect varietal innovation. But patents are increasingly being claimed on living organisms, breaking down the borders between these areas. Behind this technical question, the freedom for farmers and for seed breeders to develop new varieties is at stake, as breeders’ and farmers’ exemptions – which enable genetic material to circulate and development to occur – are not recognised in patents. Patents on plants also contribute to concentration in the seed sector and to the reduction of cultivated biodiversity.

By the end of the year, the European Commission is expected to release a legal interpretation on the Directive on the legal protection of biotechnology inventions (98/44). It should answer the question of whether products derived from “essentially biological processes” can be patented or not. In other words, whether it is possible to patent a plant, a seed or a native trait (naturally occurring genetic information content by a plant or a seed corresponding to a function in this plant or this seed). In December 2015, the European Parliament adopted a resolution stating that plants, seeds and native traits should be excluded from patentability and asking the European Commission to clarify its position.

CLIMATE CHANGE

EU CLIMATE AND ENERGY PACKAGE 2030

In 2014, a 40% reduction target for GHG emissions was agreed on by the Council for 2030 and a mandate given to the European Commission to develop proposals for the EU climate and energy framework. The Commission package consists of 3 pillars:

• The EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) governing emissions from the energy sector, with a target of 43% less emissions compared to 2005
• The Effort Sharing Regulation (ESR) governing emissions from transport, building, waste and non-CO2 emissions from agriculture (namely methane and nitrous oxide) with an overall target of 30% less emissions, with each Member State having individual targets
• The Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) which includes CO2 emissions and removals from afforestation, reforestation, deforestation, cropland and grazing land, with a target of zero net emissions

On 20 July, the Commission presented proposals for the ESR and the LULUCF pillars. This is the first time that the LULUCF area will be accounted for at European level. The proposals will go through the standard co-decision process at EU level (Commission, Parliament and Council must agree). The Parliament designated Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE, NL) and Norbert Lins (EPP, DE) as rapporteurs for the ESR and LULUCF files respectively. Both are members of the Environment Committee, but the Agriculture committee is claiming joint competence on the two files and started a procedural battle that will have to be settled by the conference of committee chairs in the coming weeks.

The pressure from countries with a high share of their emissions in the agriculture sector is precisely the reason why the Commission proposes a flexibility mechanism through which countries sequestering CO2 with cropland, grassland and afforestation would be allowed to account for this in reaching their targets, de facto diminishing their effort to reduce emissions.

The IFOAM EU Climate Change Task Force is currently working on a position paper on the two proposals. IFOAM EU also co-signed a letter with a coalition of 28 NGOs asking EU Environmental Ministers to ensure that the EU delivers on its commitments in the Paris Agreement to take effective and ambitious action to limit global warming to 1.5°C, and to close the loopholes that would weaken the ESR targets.

To get involved, please contact effimia.chatzinikolaou[at]ifoam-eu.org.
IFOAM EU has called for strong political commitment on public goods payments under the next CAP reform following the adoption of the new Cork Declaration for Rural Development. The new Declaration came at the end of a 2-day stakeholder conference held in Cork 5–6 September, attended by IFOAM EU Board Member Thomas Fertl, IFOAM EU Council Chair Gillian Westbrook and IFOAM EU Deputy Policy Manager Stephen Meredith.

Entitled “A new Cork Declaration – A Better Life in Rural Areas”, the declaration was the product of deliberations of over 300 key agri-food stakeholders from across Europe. It sets out 10 policy orientations for the future of rural development and agriculture, including preserving the rural environment, managing natural resources, and encouraging climate action.

Highlighting the fact that short-term EU policy fixes are simply propping up a failing agriculture model, IFOAM EU has welcomed the affirmation of the need for greater investment in environmental public goods set out in the declaration. Strong political commitment from EU leaders to work towards fundamental change of the existing CAP is urgently needed to turn the ambitious elements of the declaration into reality.

The Cork 2.0 Declaration seeks to follow the spirt and builds on the first Cork Declaration on Rural Development signed in 1996. The new Declaration is seen to have unofficially kicked-off the debate on the next CAP reform. At the end of September, Agriculture Commissioner Phil Hogan indicated his intentions to publish policy options which could effectively frame future design of the CAP post-2020 by the summer of 2017.

SENIOR EU ADVISOR FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CALLS FOR A CAP CENTRED ON AGROECOLOGY

In a policy paper entitled Sustainability Now! A European Vision for Sustainability, the EU’s Senior Advisor for Sustainable Development Karl Falkenberg has called for a CAP that puts “people, environment and profit on an equal footing.”

The paper states that agroecological approaches provide a viable solution for the future of agriculture in the EU and links agroecology with the provision of ecosystem services, the protection of the environment and landscapes, as well as better human health and improved social outcomes. The report was published by the European Political Strategy Centre, which provides strategic analysis and policy advice to the President of the European Union Jean-Claude Juncker.

MEMBER STATES CALL FOR THE USE OF PESTICIDES ON ECOLOGICAL FOCUS AREAS TO BE MAINTAINED

The use of synthetic pesticides and fertilisers on Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs) is currently permitted under existing rules, but the Commission proposed banning their use as part of the revision of the delegated acts on greening. The maintenance of EFAs is part of requirements set out under the Pillar 1 greening payments of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Previously, when drawing up the delegated acts in 2013–2014 the Commission had chosen not to prohibit the use of agrochemicals, despite demands from IFOAM EU and other civil society organisations for a clear ban.

At the meeting of EU agriculture ministers on 10 October 2016 18 Member States publically called for the use pesticides on EFAs to remain permissible under the current CAP.

This discussion comes as the Member States and European Parliament have two months to scrutinise the texts of delegated acts. They cannot amend the proposal, but may reject them or request an additional two-month period to review them further.
EU BUDGET REVIEW COULD PROMOTE COSTLY RISK TAKING IN AGRICULTURE

On 15 September, the Commission published proposals for the mid-term review of the Multi-Annual Financial Framework 2014–2020, which covers all four of the basic CAP regulations and other EU funds under a so called ‘omnibus regulation’.

As part of the revamp, Member States would be able to set up costly income stabilisation tools for specific sectors as a response to market volatility. A more general tool already exists, under the existing Rural Development Programmes, but only 12 Member States have opted to use it to date. IFOAM EU rejected the introduction of such a tool when the last CAP was negotiated, because it can incentivize risk taking, benefit insurance companies, and undermine investments in more sustainable approaches.

The introduction of sector-specific tools that allow for targeted support for the dairy sector, for example, comes at a time when Member States are firefighting market volatility in several agricultural sectors. The proposals come some weeks after an informal meeting of Agricultural Ministers in France at the beginning of September, where French Farm Minister Stéphane Le Foll suggested that a 3rd Pillar of the CAP should be introduced post-2020 to support farmers’ incomes during periods of market volatility.

Other changes related to the CAP include giving Member States greater autonomy to define who is an “active farmer” and to tweak the rules on Financial Instruments (loans, guarantees and equity) administered by European Investment Bank, which are designed to complement support under Rural Development Programmes. The proposal also aims to give Member States the possibility of using available Rural Development Programme funds to respond to “man-made catastrophes” such as the refugee crisis without having to wait for amendments to their programmes.

The omnibus regulation is subject to the co-decision process between the General Affairs Council of the European Union and the European Parliament. A political agreement is expected to be reached in 2017 with the new legislation coming into force before 1 January 2018. The overall outcomes of Multi-Annual Financial Framework mid-term review are expected to inform the discussion on the EU budget post-2020. The Commission will likely issue proposals for the next EU budget at the end of 2017. IFOAM EU will continue to carefully monitor key developments in the process.

UNFAIR TRADING PRACTICES IN THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR: MEMBER STATES CLASH

EU Agricultural Ministers were at odds about the best ways to tackle unfair trading practices in the food supply chain at recent informal meeting of the AGRIFISH Council, organised by the Slovak Presidency in Bratislava between 11–13 September. The Informal Council was organised around the theme of strengthening of the position of farmers in the food supply chain and saw Member States split on the question of whether common EU rules, or a combination of voluntary policy instruments introduced by individual Member States complemented by self-regulation by the industry, were necessary to address unfair practices.

The Informal Council discussion comes after the adoption of a resolution by the European Parliament in June calling for a common framework to fight unfair trading practices at EU level. The Slovak Presidency is keen to finalise Council Conclusions by the last AGRIFISH Council of 2016 scheduled to take place on 12-December. Meanwhile, the Commission set up an Agricultural Markets Task Force at the beginning of 2016 to find solutions and improve the position of farmers in the food chain; it is due to present its final report at the end of the year.
MEPS DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF EU FERTILISER LAWS

Discussions on the Commission’s legislative proposals to revise the current EU law on fertilisers (Regulation (EC) No 2003/2003) have kicked-off in the European Parliament Internal Market Committee on 12 October 2016. The workshop, entitled “Reforming Single Market for fertilising products” was attended by IFOAM EU and Rolf Maedar, Head of Quality Assurance at FiBL Germany.

The Commission proposal to revise the fertiliser legislation is part of its larger Circular Economy Action Plan launched in December 2015, which aims to “close the loop” between production, consumption and waste through greater recycling and re-use. The proposal on fertilisers focuses on bringing organic and waste-based fertilisers under the scope of the legislation, which currently covers only fertilisers coming from mineral or synthetic raw materials, and seeks to introduce new harmonised requirements based on quality, safety and labelling. The Parliament IMCO committee is taking the lead on the development of the Parliament’s position and the Committees on Agriculture, Environment and International Trade will provide opinions on the aspects that fall under their remit.

The proposal is of interest to the organic sector with regards to the maintenance of animal manure and compost at farm level, the registration of bio-stimulants, processing and labelling requirements, and the development of phosphorus-based fertilisers through waste recycling, amongst others. Recently, IFOAM EU has established a taskforce to support its work in monitoring and input for the process. For more information, please contact stephen.meredith[ at ]ifoam-eu.org.

EU PARLIAMENT BEGINS WORK ON FARMLAND CONCENTRATION AND ACCESS TO LAND

Land tenure is primarily regulated by individual Member States, but trends concerning land grabbing and land access are increasing influenced by decisions made at EU level such as those related to the Common Agricultural Policy. The issue is of particular interest for the organic farming community in terms of finding solutions for preserving organic and agro-ecological land management, supporting existing farmers and facilitating the entry of new farmers through land access.

MEPs in the Committee for Agriculture held their first exchange of views concerning farmland concentration in the EU and how to facilitate the access to land for farmers on 12 October. The exchange kicked-off discussions on an “own-initiative” report being drafted by German Socialist MEP Maria Noichl.

The own-initiative report is a response to the opening of the question of land access in the Parliament thanks to a petition and Parliamentary hearing involving Terre de Liens, Via Campesina and IFOAM EU. A first draft of MEP Niochl’s report is expected to be presented to the Committee in early November. IFOAM EU will continue to monitor the process. For further information please contact stephen.meredith[ at ]ifoam-eu.org.
NEW PLATFORM FOR FARMERS TO FIND ORGANIC SOLUTIONS LAUNCHED

A new platform – OK-Net Arable – aimed at filling the gap in the exchange of information between farmers across Europe was launched. The complexity of organic farming requires farmers to have a very high level of knowledge and skills. But exchange on organic farming techniques remains limited. IFOAM EU has therefore been working together with partners across Europe to bring you OK-Net Arable, a web-based platform to promote exchange of knowledge among farmers, farm advisers and scientists.

Farmers and farm associations can use OK-Net Arable to find practical organic solutions, and at the same time discuss how they work on the field, in your geographic and climatic conditions, and, in the end, to increase productivity and quality in organic arable cropping all over Europe.

Farmer’s needs were taken into account at every stage of development in order to make it easy for you to use. The platform is available in 10 languages, and the solutions are divided according to the most relevant topics in organic arable farming: Soil quality and fertility, nutrient management, pest and disease control, weed management and solutions for specific crops.

EIP-AGRI UPDATE

ESTABLISHING OPERATIONAL GROUPS

Over 3,200 operational groups are expected to be established under the Rural Development Programmes for 2014–2020. To set up a successful operational group, a good innovative idea, the right partners, a solid plan and effective ways of spreading the results are needed. To help you navigate your way through setting up an operational group, EIP-AGRI now has a specific section on its website and a new brochure guiding actors through the important steps in the lifetime of an operational group. There is also a new leaflet presenting 11 existing operational groups, including 5 addressing organic farming.

In the Innovation Arena of TP Organics you can find information on all the operational groups related to organic. We hope this information can inspire you. Write to info[ @ ]tporganics.eu for more info.

THREE NEW FOCUS GROUPS LAUNCHED

Three new EIP-AGRI Focus Groups have started:

- Robust and resilient dairy production systems
- Agroforestry: introducing woody vegetation into intensive crop and livestock systems
- Diseases and pests in viticulture: increasing resilience of grape vines to pests and diseases and supporting the productivity of the sector in sustainable ways

IFOAM EU PARTICIPATES IN NEW PROJECT: X-FACTORS

Together with partners from 29 countries, IFOAM EU is embarking on a new Horizon 2020-funded project entitled X-FACTORS. The project, coordinated by the National Research Council of Italy, aims to establish a multidisciplinary research program to answer the urgent need to improve prevention, early detection and control of the Xylella fastidiosa disease. Recently, Xylella fastidiosa was introduced to Italy, where it is causing severe damage to olive crops, and in France, where so far it is limited to ornamental plants and some landscape trees. The overall goals of the research program is to assess Xylella fastidiosa’s potential to spread throughout the EU territory and to develop a comprehensive integrated management strategy for diseases associated with Xylella fastidiosa, applicable in both to integrated pest management and organic farming systems. The project also aims to prevent the disease spread, and limit its economic, environmental and social impact should outbreaks occur. IFOAM EU will be sharing the results and findings as the project kicks off at the end of November.

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 652654. This communication only reflects the author’s view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 727987. This communication only reflects the author’s view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.
2 IFOAM EU DEVELOPMENTS

NEW COLLEAGUES

Pauline Verrière
In September Pauline joined IFOAM EU Policy Unit with great enthusiasm. She will work on GMOs issues, new genetic engineering techniques, patents on life, TTIP and will continue the work on the Keeping GMOs out of food project, started in 2014. Pauline holds a master’s in environmental and urban planning law and a master’s in European and International environmental law. The comparison of the European organic label and private standards was the subject of her master thesis (2007). For almost six years, she worked for a French NGO called Inf’OGM, specialized on providing independent information on GMOs issues. Pauline is really interested in agriculture issues because they are at the crossroad of important concerns: environmental protection and making the world a fairer place. She believes that organic agriculture provides significant options to achieving such goals and is very proud to join IFOAM EU team and to contribute to its work.

Triin Viilvere
Triin holds a master in Environmental Science from the Estonian University of Life Science. She’s passionate about organic – growing up in an organic farm which her family owns, she not only has the theoretical knowledge but also knows in practice how to grow organic food. That’s why she appreciates the hard work of organic farmers and values sustainable agriculture a lot. Triin is grateful to have possibility to join the IFOAM EU communications team as a EVS Volunteer. She’s looking forward to the opportunity to gain more in-depth understanding of organic and the impact of EU legislation.

Pascal Lejeune
At the beginning of October, Pascal joined the communication team as an IT consultant. He has been working as a freelancer since January 2015, after a career of more than 20 years as an IT specialist in the private sector. He has experience in user applications, web interface, networking, IT infrastructure, troubleshooting and secure IT and has worked as an IT coordinator and project manager. Pascal holds an engineering degree in agronomy. He is passionate about IT and decided to work in this domain, and so followed a training course at IBM just after graduation. Throughout his professional life, Pascal learned both by on his own and through professional courses; recently he obtained the Apple OS X certification. Pascal is pleased to join the IFOAM EU staff and to use his expertise in support of their activities.

The European Volunteer Service is funded by the Erasmus + programme of the European Union. The sole responsibility for the content lies with the author and the communication reflects only the author’s view. The National Agency and European Commission are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.
SAYING GOODBYE

Zane Zake
In August, IFOAM EU wished Zane all the best. She joined IFOAM EU as a volunteer and was a valuable part of the events and operations team for over a year and a half. She was actively involved in the organisation of the two biggest events during her stay at IFOAM EU. The 9th and 10th European Organic Congresses were a big success and her hard work was a big part. She also provided great assistance in the day-to-day office work, helped to improve the working environment. We hope Zane will benefit from her time at IFOAM EU and wish her all the best in her home country of Latvia.

DEVELOPING ORGANIC IN 2015

In 2015, IFOAM EU continued its work across many areas of organic in Europe: from tirelessly advocating for an organic regulation that meets the needs of organic farmers, processors, traders and consumers to putting organic forward as part of the solution to feeding the people; from safeguarding farming in the EU from GMOs to positioning and demonstrating the role of organic farming in mitigating climate change; and from protecting biodiversity in seed to ensuring that the EU research agenda takes up the needs of organic. Revisit our annual report to learn about our achievements and activities.

ARE YOU AN IFOAM EU MEMBER? INTERESTED IN ORGANIC AND CLIMATE CHANGE?
JOIN US TO LEARN ABOUT THE NEW EU CLIMATE AND ENERGY PACKAGE FOR 2030 AND ITS IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

12 December, 15:00 – 16:30 Brussels time

During this one-hour session, the EU proposals on climate change and their impact on agriculture will be explained in detail.

The 40% EU target for GHG emissions reduction by 2030 may have a significant impact on agriculture in the EU and on the shape of the next CAP. It is crucial for the organic movement to be active, relevant and visible in this debate on climate change & agriculture, and to make sure that all the benefits organic farming offers are taken into account.

It a great opportunity to ask questions about the EU’s plans and learn about advocacy efforts and tools at EU, national and regional levels.

If you wish to attend, please register

For more information, contact caterina.berardi[@]ifoam-eu.org
3 EVENTS

3.1 PREVIEW OF EVENTS

HOW CAN THE CAP DRIVE CLIMATE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION IN AGRICULTURE?

9 November, Committee of the Regions, Brussels

On 9 November, IFOAM EU is organising an event on “How can the CAP drive climate change mitigation and adaptation in the agriculture sector?” The event is part of the SOLMACC project and will include presentations on how the farms testing climate-friendly practices have successfully reduced their emissions, regional approaches to climate change and how the CAP can better support climate change mitigation and adaptation in agriculture, in light of the EU targets for 2030.

Agenda
Register by 2 November

REGISTER NOW FOR THE 4TH ORGANIC PROCESSING CONFERENCE

24–25 November, Seville, Spain

On social media? Stay up-to-date with #4OPC

For more information about the programme and the venue visit organicfoodprocessing.eu

ORGANIC INNOVATION DAYS – REGISTRATION IS OPEN

6–7 December, Brussels

Following the successful launch of the Organic Innovation Days in 2015, the second edition of Organic Innovation Days will take place in Brussels on 6–7 December 2016.

Find out what’s on the agenda and register. Registration is free and open until 21 November 2016.

On the first day, the “Organic Innovations” winners will be announced and innovations of the organic food and farming sector will be showcased. Innovative trends in other areas of agriculture and food will also be discussed, as well as the opportunities and risks they present for organic.

The day after, a brokerage event will be organised for the new CORE Organic call. At the event, the call content, the application procedure will be explained and two brokerage sessions will give participants the opportunity to find partners for consortia.

SOLMACC is implemented by IFOAM EU, AIAB, Bioland, Ekologiska Lantbrukarna and FiBL. The project is funded under the LIFE financial instrument of the European Union. The sole responsibility for the content lies with the author and the communication reflects only the author’s view. The European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.
3.2 REVIEW OF EVENTS

DEMONSTRATION OF CLIMATE-FRIENDLY FARMING PRACTICES

29 September, Azienda Agricole Fontanabona, Italy

A SOLMACC project field day gave visitors the opportunity to learn about climate-friendly farming practices on the Azienda Agricole Fontanabona close to Verona, Italy. The farm has an area of about seven hectares and mainly produces vegetables and kiwis.

The participants learnt about the objectives of the SOLMACC project and the climate-friendly practices implemented on the farm including composting and the planting of a green manure mixture (oats, mustard, clover, leguminous grass) between rows of the orchard.

Visit the SOLMACC website to learn more about the project and the participating farms or read the latest SOLMACC newsletter.

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Paolo Fontanabona explains the SOLMACC farming practices to the Open Field Day visitors. © Ann-Kathrin Trappenberg

Participants of the SOLMACC Open Field Day visit the greenhouses at the farm Fontanabona. © Ann-Kathrin Trappenberg
SME ORGANICS: STAKEHOLDERS AND POLICYMAKERS LEARN ABOUT ORGANIC ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT IN SWITZERLAND

On 8–9 September the SME ORGANICS project organized the First Interregional Field Visit in Aargau (Switzerland) with regional stakeholders and project partners. The visit included parallel workshops around four thematic areas to discuss and exchange experience among peers with regard to which kind of policies and policy measures are most beneficial to support the organic sector at regional level.

It was hosted by the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), one of the world’s leading research and information centres for organic agriculture, which works together with farmers to develop innovative and cost-effective solutions to boost agricultural productivity while never losing sight of environmental, health and socio-economic impacts. Within SME ORGANICS, FiBL is in charge of developing a regional Organic Action Plan for the Canton of Aargau located in the North of Switzerland.

The aim of the field visit was to learn from the Swiss context about different policies and initiatives that can support the organic sector at all the stages of the value chain – from production to consumption – taking into account aspects such as innovation and SME competitiveness at both national and regional levels. The event was attended by 38 participants from Aargau (Switzerland); Aquitaine, Limousin, Poitou-Charentes (France); Lodzkie (Poland); South Ostrobothnia (Finland); North-West Romania (Romania); Navarra (Spain); Lombardy and Puglia (Italy) and IFOAM EU.

SME ORGANICS seeks to improve policies and programmes under the EU’s Investment for Growth and Jobs goal in order to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the SMEs in the organic sector of the participating regions. The project aims both at enhancing entrepreneurship but also at supporting existing SMEs in improving their performance. Learn more about SME Organics

ESA PANEL ON ORGANIC SEEDS

11 October, Rome, Italy

IFOAM EU was invited to discuss the organic seed market at the European Seed Association’s (ESA) annual congress.

Martin van der Voort, sales director at the largest supplier of organic seeds in Europe, Dutch seed company Bejo, opened the discussion by saying that Bejo had been involved in organic seed production for 15 years and that conventional breeders had much to learn from organic farmers. But according to him there is no distinction between organic and conventional breeding, the two activities should not be seen as separate.

Eric Gall, IFOAM EU Policy Manager, said that the growth of the organic market was an opportunity for seed companies, but that there was still not enough seed varieties and quantities available on the market. That is why IFOAM EU favours a pragmatic approach to increasing the use of organic seeds by farmers. He explained that IFOAM EU supports the implementation by Member States of a national annex system listing all species for which enough varieties and seeds are available, that an expert group must review the annex every year and that which varieties of organic seeds should not allow for derogations be indicated. Such a system is already implemented in the Netherlands, France and Germany. He also said that so-called “new genetic engineering techniques” should be legally
considered GMOs, and be subject to a risk assessment and to traceability and labelling.

Garlich von Essen, ESA Secretary General, stated that even though ESA would prefer a more EU-wide approach to ending derogations, there was a lot of common ground with IFOAM EU’s position. On the other hand, the two associations have divergent views on new genetic engineering techniques and on the possibility for breeders to provide transparency on the techniques they use.

All speakers stressed the importance of dialogue and agreed that Member States and the Commission should collect reliable data on the use of organic seeds and derogations more actively. Furthermore, they agreed that the fact that the issue of seeds has still not been discussed in the trilogue on the review of the organic regulation has and continues to create significant uncertainty.

MONSANTO TRIBUNAL

14 –16 October 2016, The Hague, Netherlands

The Monsanto Tribunal is an international civil society initiative aimed to publicly hold Monsanto accountable for human rights violations, crimes against humanity and ecocide.

Eminent judges heard testimony from victims, and delivered an advisory opinion following procedures of the International Court of Justice. 750 participants representing 30 nationalities from all over the world were present, while thousands of other were following online via a livestream and social media using #MonsantoTribunal.

The judges are reviewing the evidence put forward at the tribunal and will present a legal opinion soon, hopefully before the end of the year. Follow #MonsantoTribunal to stay informed.

While the tribunal was being held, social movements, seed savers & defenders, farmers and growers rallied and planned for a self-determined future at the People’s Assembly.

The Monsanto Tribunal and the People’s Assembly were about showing the costs of industrial farming for people, health and nature. Both events were organised by IFOAM – Organics International, Navdanya, Organic Consumers Association, Biovision and many more.

Revisit the Tribunal on Twitter and Facebook
Much more than just organic sweeteners…
an organic philosophy

Sipal Partners has earned a reputation for its unique range of non refined organic cereal and dried fruit concentrates thanks to:

- the variety of raw materials processed from cereals (wheat, rice, malted barley, maize, oat, spelt) and dried fruits (dates, figs and prunes);
- the multitude of sweetening and technical functionalities: cereal or fruit flavour, natural colour (from very light to darker shades), crispness, coating, fat replacer, prevent crystallisation;
- the use of clean, natural and non refining techniques that allows keeping a maximum of benefits of the raw materials, such as minerals (contents much higher than that of brown cane sugar) & guaranteeing more natural labelling (non refined rice syrup’ instead of ‘sugar’ or ‘glucose syrup).

Sipal Partners has acquired a know-how in the organic sector over more than 20 years and has implemented an ultra-modern production tool dedicated to organic raw materials guaranteeing complete traceability from fields to the concentrates.

A consumption method from closer home and environmentally friendly is entirely in line with the organic philosophy.

Sipal range:
- wheat syrups, rice syrups, manioc syrups, maize syrup, malted barley syrups, oat syrups, spelt syrup, date juice concentrate and purée, fig juice concentrate, prune juice concentrate.

Seda range:
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- Organic, Kosher, Clean label, whole grain, ISO 22000 & 9001, FSSC 22000, GMO free, gluten free, Fair trade, Baby Food.

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IFOAM EU KEY SUPPORTERS 2016

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.

JOIN OUR CURRENT PARTNERS AND MAKE YOUR DONATION!

WORKING IN THE ORGANIC SECTOR? COMMITTED TO MAKE EUROPE MORE ORGANIC?

DONATE NOW!

Protect your interests and help us make Europe more organic by:

• Ensuring that EU regulations match the reality of organic producers
• Ensuring that EU and national legislation do not discriminate against organic and traditional seed production
• Fighting the expansion of GMO use in Europe and protecting organic farmers and producers from contamination

You can help MAKE EUROPE MORE ORGANIC

Join our current partners and make your donation!
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