

PRESS RELEASE

**THE ORGANIC MOVEMENT CALLS FOR THE REGULATION OF NEW GENETIC ENGINEERING TECHNIQUES AS GMOS**

**BRUSSELS, 27 SEPTEMBER 2017** – Tomorrow, the European Commission organises a stakeholders discussion on new genetic engineering techniques and their legal status at the [High Level Conference Modern Biotechnologies in Agriculture – Paving the way for responsible innovation](#). The decision on how to regulate these new GMOs will have important consequences on the whole food production chain and on the organic sector in particular. However, so far the European Commission has delayed the publication of its own legal interpretation, and there is a legal case pending at the European Court of Justice ([Case C-528/16](#), Confédération Paysanne e.a.), for which a decision is expected in 2018.

Jan Plagge, IFOAM EU Vice President for Policy, says: “[The position of the organic movement is clear](#): all new genetic engineering techniques should be, without question, considered as techniques of genetic modification leading to GMOs and fall within the scope of the existing legislation on GMOs. There are no legal or technical reasons to exclude these techniques from risk assessment, prior authorisation and mandatory traceability and labelling, which apply to current GMOs.”

He adds: “Deregulation of new genetic engineering techniques would jeopardise the ability of the organic sector to remain GMO-free and would threaten the freedom of farmers and consumers not to use these new GMOs. The European Commission should guarantee that no product obtained through new genetic engineering techniques will be marketed before detection methods are available, and should fund EU research projects to develop these detection methods”.

Eric Gall, Policy Manager at IFOAM EU, states: “The organic movement stands by the precautionary principle, which is a cornerstone of EU environmental policy and a driver for innovation. It promotes a system approach to innovation that is knowledge-intensive rather than input-intensive, and furthermore is inclusive, strengthening resilience in agricultural systems and minimising our impact on biodiversity and natural resources.”

Jan Plagge will present the views of the European organic movement at the [High Level Conference Modern Biotechnologies in Agriculture – Paving the way for responsible innovation](#). Read the [full position of IFOAM EU on new genetic engineering techniques](#).

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IFOAM EU represents more than 190 member organisations in the EU-28, the EU accession countries and EFTA. Member organisations span the entire organic food chain and beyond: from farmers and processors organisations, retailers, certifiers, consultants, traders and researchers to environmental and consumer advocacy bodies