

PRESS RELEASE

EU Parliament debate questions legal proposal for a new EU organic regulation

Brussels, 3 December 2014 – The European Parliament today held a hearing on the legislative proposal for a new EU organic regulation (1). The lively debate confirmed the need for a change in the approach. The European Parliament rapporteur, Martin Häusling, concluded that “We don’t want a complete revision of the EU organic regulation, but a reform that will work in practice. This is our ambition in the Parliament.” He followed a key demand of the sector and many different stakeholders.

Jan Plagge, IFOAM EU board member stated during the hearing “The organic sector has always been open for a stepwise improvement of the current regulation, like on the imports, greenhouse production or poultry rules. Unfortunately the proposal as it stands will lead to a huge loss of organic production in Europe and seriously undermine the EU’s growth and jobs agenda. If we want to achieve the common objective for sustainable growth of organic in the EU, we need a new proposal.”

IFOAM EU welcomes the announcement by DG Agriculture Commissioner Hogan to take a fresh look at the proposal. “The European Commission understood that they went too far with their legal proposal turning the whole sector upside down. IFOAM EU is looking forward to find constructive solutions for an ambitious framework for sustainable growth for organic production in Europe”, says Christopher Stopes, IFOAM EU president.

The IFOAM EU position (2) provides a detailed analysis of the original Commission proposal, now the subject of intense work by the Italian Presidency. IFOAM EU urges the European Parliament, the EU Commission and the EU Council to come up with a radical new proposal. A new approach could result in a regulation that builds on the success of the current regulation (3) and provides the framework for sustainable growth for the sector, recognising that organic is good for jobs and growth as well as the environment and animal welfare.

(1) EU Parliament Hearing on new organic regulation is available online at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/committees/video?event=20141203-0900-COMMITTEE-AGRI>

(2) IFOAM EU Position paper on the proposed organic regulation: http://www.ifoam-eu.org/sites/default/files/ifoameu_regulation_position_paper_roadmap_growth_organic_sector_20141110_0.pdf

(3) EU Organic Regulations (EC) No 834/2007 and (EC) 889/2008 and 1235/2008

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IFOAM EU represents more than 160 member organizations in the EU-28, the EU accession countries and EFTA. Member organizations 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