

PRESS RELEASE

Organic regulation negotiations, is the end near?

Brussels, 4 July 2016 – Last Friday the Slovak Republic took over the Presidency of the EU from the Netherlands, and is now the sixth Presidency in a row to work on the organic dossier. For the next semester, the Slovaks will negotiate for the Council of the EU in discussions with the EU Commission and Parliament on the new organic regulation.

“IFOAM EU would like to acknowledge the commitment and effort of the Dutch Presidency to reach an agreement on the organic regulation during its term” said Bavo van den Idsert, IFOAM EU board member. “Although progress has been made in some crucial areas, the end of the negotiations does not seem to be in sight and while discussions continue at political level, organic farmers and processors across the EU – and beyond – must continue to run their businesses not knowing what the rules will be in the near future. We hope all negotiators will make organic a priority in order to quickly agree on a new regulation that supports the development of organic in Europe and that relieves actors from the burden of uncertainty.”

“Before presenting its work programme for 2015, the Commission reviewed all the pending legislative proposals, including the organic one” added Jan Plagge, IFOAM EU vice president. “At the time, it was said that the organic regulation proposal would be withdrawn and replaced by a new initiative if no agreement was reached in the next six months. It is now 18 months later and the organic dossier is still on the table, with viewpoints diverging significantly on crucial areas. Further delay is not acceptable.”

“IFOAM EU welcomes the Slovak Presidency, which will have the great responsibility of guiding the ‘organic’ negotiations in the next 6 months” said Eduardo Cuoco, IFOAM EU director. “Year after year, organic is the most promising agricultural sector and consumer demand for organic is growing at almost triple the rate of the rest of the food industry. Organic delivers growth, jobs and consumer satisfaction, as well as benefits to the environment and animal welfare. We believe the Slovak Republic, where the share of organic land is about 10%, will work hard to reach an agreement that provides value beyond the current organic regulation and that restores confidence to EU organic operators.”

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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