<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Table of contents</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Newsletter No 54, April 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Welcome Note</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2. IFOAM EU Internal Updates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-9</td>
<td>6th European Organic Congress</td>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>2.1 Sponsorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>1. News/ Updates of IFOAM EU Working Fields</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Sponsor Presentation: Aloja Starkelsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Key IFOAM EU Group Sponsor Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-11</td>
<td>1.1 Regulation</td>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>3. Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>Political Hot Spot</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.1 Calendar of Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>1.2 Policy</td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Photo of the Month and Imprint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>Common Agriculture Policy (CAP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>GMOs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.3 TP Organics / EU Research Policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dear reader,

welcome to our newsletter, providing the latest news and information from the IFOAM EU Group. Spring, the start of a new season of growth and development in nature is also a time for re-energising our work for Europe’s organic movement. Our 6th European Organic Congress, in Copenhagen on 17th and 18th April, gave us that energy! The Congress involved 200 participants and presented a clear vision on “Smart change – towards a sustainable CAP: Organic and high nature value farming shaping future food systems”. At the Congress, high level speakers and well informed debate outlined the role of organic farming in CAP reform.

To hold the Congress in Denmark, during the Danish Presidency of the EU, gave a wonderfully motivating context for the event. Denmark’s clear policy commitment to organic food and farming is an inspiration – for example; Denmark aims to double the area of organic farming by 2020, and aims to achieve 60% organic food in public canteens. It is well on the way to achieving both goals!

It is always encouraging to have the active participation of the Organic Farming Unit of DG Agri in our Congresses. This time it was a privilege to also welcome the Deputy Director General of DG Agri, Jerzy Bogdan Plewa. He stated that support for organic farming remains an essential ingredient in the policy recipe for sustainable food production. The Congress also gave the opportunity to launch our new IFOAM EU dossier on the first three years of the EU organic regulation; this provides a useful framework for the evaluation and review of the regulation planned by the Commission this year. The IFOAM EU Group will actively participate in this process.

We were all very grateful for the true Danish welcome provided by our hosts, Organic Denmark, and sincere thanks are due to that inclusive cross-sector organisation for showing us how good the organic world is in Denmark. As Evald Vestergaard, President of Organic Denmark said; “Danish organic farmers are ready to face future challenges and to respond to societal demands that reach further than those currently reflected in the organic standards at EU level”. IFOAM EU Group supports this positive view and we look to all our members and the organic sector as a whole to take the steps necessary to make this a reality for all.

I hope that you find the Newsletter informative and helpful in your work. Please give feedback, and remember to tell us your news so that we can communicate it widely!

Christopher Stopes,
President of IFOAM EU Group
6th European Organic Congress Highlights!

It is not only that Denmark holds the EU Presidency at the moment, but also that the country provides the best practice example of promoting organic food and farming in its public procurement and rural development policies, which made the 6th European Organic Congress a special experience. With a target of 90% organic products in the Danish capital’s public canteens, and a countrywide target of 60% organic ingredients in meals in public kitchens, Denmark is pulling the organic market forward from the demand side. Organic Denmark President, Evald Vesteergard, who opened the 6th European Organic Congress, stressed that “market development is key for the growth of organic farming and therefore promotion of organic products should be possible under rural development as it has been before.” More than 180 participants joined the discussions on 17 and 18 April 2012 which centred on the CAP reform, the development of the European organic regulations and sustainable consumption, and of course, enjoying the delicious organic food during the breaks.

CAP post 2013 - greener, smarter, fairer?

The CAP reform debate is at a crucial stage at the moment and was the subject of discussion for the high level policy panel at the congress. The first speaker, Deputy Director-General in DG AGRI at the European Commission Jerzy Bogdan Plewa, acknowledged how the organic movement has been contributing with a clear and strong voice to the ongoing CAP debate. The voices have been heard, the Commission has made proposals for the CAP to be greener, fairer and smarter, Plewa explained. He continued that greening has also been reflected in the 2nd pillar. Member states can use different measures to enhance sustainability, so for example, possible cooperation measures to work jointly on climate and environment improvements.

The current chairman of the Council Working Group on Rural Development, Morten Lautrup-Larsen, presented the priorities of the Danish EU Presidency in the CAP debate. Those included a strong focus on measures to tackle climate and environmental challenges, the promotion of the EU Organic logo, and the integration of sustainable agriculture and market competitiveness. Larsen stated that the Danish government recognises greening of the CAP as a positive element, but the CAP must provide the right, targeted incentives to become greener, and rural development programmes must be clear and comprehensible for farmers.

Arie van den Brand, Group de Bruges and ARC2020 network, called on participants and the panel to help ensure that the next modernisation of the CAP will not be another technical adjustment, but...
the modernisation of the system itself. He outlined that 20 years ago, environmental NGOs were against the CAP at all, whereas today, a constructive dialogue and cooperation for a better CAP between farmers and the environmentally concerned became possible. This cooperation must lead to an even broader movement, to strengthen voices for change to reach real greening. The CAP should be replaced by a Common Agricultural Food Policy, including the entire food chain. Regarding the current debate in the European Parliament’s Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development, to reach a first reading agreement between Council and Parliament with very a limited discussion in the plenary, he outlined that the necessary change of the CAP could only be reached with a broad societal debate. Not only members of the AGRI committee, but of the whole EU Parliament must get involved in the CAP discussions. He called on all participants to contact the Members of European Parliament in their region to stand up for a real reform.

Christopher Stopes, IFOAM EU Group President, described the IFOAM EU Group proposals to reach significant greening of the whole CAP. Crop rotation and maximum livestock densities as condition for all direct payments would be key steps towards more sustainable agriculture. Organic farming must be at the heart of the CAP reform, and an update to the EU organic action plan to make organic even smarter, greener and fairer. During the press conference, Stopes took the opportunity to present the IFOAM EU Group – European Organic Regulation Dossier, stating that the “dossier gives a clear overview on where organic farming stands and provides an outlook on where the sector needs to develop.”

Workshops

The CAP has also been the subject of discussion in the workshop Smart Change for the CAP post 2013 – strategic steps ahead. The workshop started with Sieta van Keimpena, representing the European Milk Board and ARC 2000, who reflected on the state of farm gate milk prices and resulting farmers’ incomes. To reach fairer prices for farmers and consumers, she called for market monitoring and management instruments. Faustine Defossez, European Environmental Bureau, displayed how the CAP has led to an environmental nightmare. EEB and the IFOAM EU Group along with other NGOs have published a vision for a new CAP, along with fact sheets, to highlight various problems and solutions. Defossez emphasised that greening must be more ambitious and a package approach is needed, where all farmers must be involved in order...
to prevent some member states and farmers falling behind. Thomas Fertl, Vice-President of IFOAM EU Group, outlined the core demands brought forward by the IFOAM EU Group in the CAP debate. He emphasised that organic farming is the only EU wide certified system that covers a broad range of sustainability aspects, delivers to the CAP objectives of long term food security, environmental sustainability and vibrant rural areas and societies. Susanne Padel, Organic Research Centre, emphasised the need for a comprehensive policy framework to support farmers to convert to and remain organic, covering amongst others advisory, training and marketing tools. Therefore, clear guidance from the EU for the implementation of pillar 2 would be necessary. The European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) was presented by Donald Aquilina as a tool to facilitate communication between rural development networks and contribute to sustainable rural communities. Incentives and obstacles for the development of the EU organic market were analysed by Lizzie Melby Jespersen from ICROFS. She highlighted that push and pull incentives should both be supported, e.g. producer and processor networks and cooperatives, organic, healthy, climate and resource friendly catering, conversion checks, marketing campaigns, organic education of young farmers and organic research.

management. Arjon Kalter of Tradin addressed concerns regarding the import sector and changes to the importing rules, highlighting the role of the importers themselves in exchanging information to improve controls. Finally, Andrea Ferranti of the Italian certifier AIAB elaborated on the need for international exchange of information on certificates and products for rapid identification of uncertified operators and products. The panel also included, Jean-Francois Hulot, Head of Organic Unit, European Commission, Michela Coli of ICEA and Alexander Gerber of BOLW.

“Organic regulation – new developments, pointers to the future”

A second session entitled “Organic regulation – new developments, pointers to the future” was moderated by Dorota Metera of the Polish certifier Bio-Ekspert. Jean-Francois Hulot, spoke on “Organic regulation – stage of implementation, current and future work”. In a comprehensive speech, he
discussed the history of the regulation and the current markets and areas that the commission are working on. These include the changes to the current import control system, the changes necessary due to the Lisbon Treaty and the impending report to the Council and Parliament on the working of the regulation. Sybille Kyed of Organic Denmark described the need for flexibility and for risk based approaches, and called on the commission to adopt these opportunities during the forthcoming review. Francis Blake, speaking for the Leading Organic Alliance, outlined the possible approaches towards the regulation of organic production in Europe, and the options for inclusion of various products currently outside the scope of the regulations.

**Policies for sustainable and healthy food consumption**

Being in Denmark, which provides numerous examples of the effective mainstreaming of organic food in public canteens, one workshop was dedicated to questions surrounding how the good food gets to the consumer, how sustainable consumption can be stimulated, and what health benefits consumers.

Benjamin Caspar from the European Commission explained that the long-term resilience of the food system is under threat. As current policies, that could be useful to tackle the different threats, are fragmented, and little attention is, until now, given to the important aspect of consumption, the Commission is now developing ideas and strategies on how to promote sustainable consumer behaviour. Some local initiatives were presented by Pete Ritchie from Nourish Scotland. He described several citizen initiatives for local food, e.g. Fife Diet, Nourish, eco-schools, Whitmuir – the organic place (CSA). Ritchie elaborated that there is a need to reconnect food, land, people and health, here he sees the organic movement at the heart of initiatives, but emphasised the need to make new alliances. Chronic diseases associated with over-consumption and poor diets as well as food security and food safety are major challenges for the society that must be addressed through food policies, according to Robert Pederson from the European Public Health and Agriculture Consortium (EPHAC). Pederson called for a broader view on healthy food – linking human health with environmental health. Converging agendas of Global Food Security, Climate change and chronic disease would result in changed diets, less dairy and meat products, less processed foods high in fat, sugar and salt. The promotion of sustainable diets through the CAP and other policies must be high on the agenda.

"The Copenhagen Method" - A transition in both minds and saucepans was presented by Anya Hultberg, Københavns Madhus (House of Food). She gave an overview on how Copenhagen successfully implemented 60 % organic food ingredients in public canteens by 2009, 75 % by 20111 and is now planning to reach 90 % by 2015. Targeted side effects are waste reduction in the canteens and to stimulate overall food awareness within consumers and kitchen staff. Karen Eriksen from the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration, followed up with an explanation the Danish action plan towards 60 % organic food in public kitchens all over the country. She explained that this target could be reached only with broad public-private partnerships and outlined the four major steps: 1. Pioneer projects, 2. Basic tools, 3. Ensuring supply, and 4. Increasing demand. For another country’s example, Marijke Van Ranst from BioForum Vlaanderen provided insight into the public procurement campaign «Organic on the menu» in Flanders. In 2011, 10 local authorities signed the act of engagement and committed to not only promote organic but also set an example. Several good practices are included in the city initiatives, e.g. weekly organic apples for staff members, bioweeks, organic sandwiches on public events and others. Chris Atkinson from the Soil Association introduced the project Food for Life – bringing the good food to the people. The goal is to achieve healthier diets with freshly prepared, local and seasonal food, in particular in disadvantaged schools. It includes activities such as the award schemes, training and support, farm
visits, direct financial support, link with food services and independent evaluations.

An outlook on the future for sustainable farming

Prior to the final panel discussion, Ybele Hogeven from the European Environment Agency described how the food systems impact the environment, economy and human wellbeing. The CAP is an important policy to shape the food system, but has until now insufficiently delivered on sustainability. As an example he outlined the distribution of CAP payments - payments tend to be much higher in high productive areas than in high nature value areas; organic farming still remains below 10% of the area in most member states. A coherent approach is needed to address the challenges such as climate change, biodiversity, chemical residues in food and water and soil erosion. He recognised that the Commission proposals for the CAP 2014-2020 are a small step into right direction, but that more rigorous change is needed to reach a long-term transition towards efficient yet low-input agrisystems.

In the following discussion, Johannes Nebel from...
Danish organic experience!
On the 16th of April 2012, the day before the 6th European Organic Congress began, IFOAM EU Group along with Organic Denmark, organised a unique Danish organic experience. The excursion commenced with a visit to the Copenhagen House of Food to enjoy an organic lunch and learn more about the high quality foods being served in the Danish public sectors. Anya Hultbery, Organic Consultant at the Copenhagen House of Food explained the current situation regarding the public procurement of organic food in Copenhagen schools and residencies and their goal of converting all Copenhagen’s public kitchens to 90% organic by 2015.

The excursion continued with a visit to a local organic Italian bakery, Il Fornario, where excursion participants were privy to a behind the scenes glance into the process and technique involved in making some of the best organic bread in Copenhagen.

At Svanholm, the excursion participants were introduced to the various agricultural practices currently in place within the commune, as well as to the framework in which the entire community coexists.

For more information please visit the Congress website

The final leg of the excursion involved visits to both an organic grain farm and Svanholm, the largest agricultural collective in Europe. On the grain farm, farmer Per Grupe produces organic cereals, and has been organic since 1982. For many years Per Grupe has searched for grains that contain specific flavours and characteristics, and now he sells his own brand of flour.
1. News/ Updates of IFOAM EU Working Fields

1.1 Organic Regulation

Political Hot Spot

An IFOAM EU delegation met Agriculture Minister Mette Gjerskov, and the current EU Danish Council Presidency for a working lunch in Copenhagen. The main topic discussed was the expected report of the Commission to the Council on the implementation of the new organic regulation and the planned Commission evaluation of the organic regulation 834/07. The report to the Council is delayed and expected now in May/June and therefore the Danish Presidency will have only a limited possibility to discuss the report. However, the IFOAM EU delegation raised some significant points on how a focused improvement of the organic regulation can look like, in particular in area of flexibility, environmental performance and imports. However, IFOAM EU underlined that a revision of the new regulation is not an option as the organic sector needs reliability and predictable improvements.

New IFOAM EU Group Regulation Dossier

At the 6th European Organic Congress in Denmark the new IFOAM EU Group Dossier on „European Organic Regulations (EC) No 834/2007, 889/2008 and 1235/2008 An Evaluation of the First Three Years – Looking for further Development” was launched. The dossier covers the major ongoing discussions regarding the Organic Regulations and presents articles by a wide range of experts in the specific fields. Beginning with an overview of the development of organic regulations since 2009, the new decision making procedures of the European institutions are being discussed and the main issues of the sectors credibility are being examined. Also current specific discussions regarding the deepening of organic rules, such as flexibility, feed, processing, poultry and greenhouses are outlined.

The dossier is available for download on the IFOAM EU Group website and will shortly be available in German, Italian and Spanish.

IFOAM EU Group has published an interpretation note on the use of conventional technical ingredients and yeasts in April 2012.

In this debate some companies producing organic products argue the possibility to postpone the introduction of this rule as this means a large obstacle as the use of organic yeast leads to lower quality in taste and texture, but at higher costs of some products.

Limitation of the use of conventional yeast in organic products

The requirements of article 27.2 c) of Regulation 889/2008 (introduced by article 1.3 b) of Regulation (EC) No 1254/2008) has started a debate on whether yeast and yeast products can only be used in organic products from the 1st of January 2014. This is not the case, the relevant change in practice from the 1st of January 2014, is the limitation of the use of conventional yeast and yeast extract to a maximum of 5% in organic labelled products.
1.1 Organic Regulation

IFOAM EU Group SGOP seminar on pesticide residues in organic production

IFOAM EU Specialist Group on Organic Processing (SGOP) members organised within the framework of the EduOFP Concept and Forum project open seminar on the pesticide residues in organic production in Warsaw 11th of April, 2012. The seminar gathered over 50 experts from Poland. The session with experts’ presentations on situation and approaches towards pesticide residues in different EU Members States were followed by the lively debate. Participants appreciated the approach of the IFOAM EU Group “Guideline for Pesticide Residue Contamination for International Trade in Organic” and look for further development of the common European approach within Polish legislation as well as in other EU countries.

Presentations are available here.

New rules on organic feed approved

The IFOAM EU Group has sent a letter to the Commission and SCOF members on March 28th. The main concern relates to the application date of new feed rules in the recent Commission proposals for amendments to Regulation (EC) No 889/2008, regarding animal feed. IFOAM EU Group appeals to the Commission for:

• prolonging the feed provisions that were in place to the end of 2011, until the date when the new rules will come into force, and
• providing the sector time to be informed about the new rules by putting them into force after a sufficient transition time.

On the meeting 30-31 March 2012, the SCOF (Standing Committee on Organic Farming) has approved the latest EU Commission proposal on organic feed with some small changes. The final text awaits publication in the Official Journal of the European Union. This text provides new rules for feed (including sourcing, ingredients and labelling). Use of non-organic protein feed is set at the maximum level 5% for years 2012-2014 and applies retrospectively as of 1 January 2012.

These amendments of the regulation include also a changed specification for the use of rosemary extracts allowed to be used "only when derived from organic production" and prolonging the derogation of the introduction of 18 weeks-old non-organic laying hens till 31 December 2014.

1.2 Policy

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

NGOs call on MEPs to enshrine international responsibility in the new CAP

The IFOAM EU Group in partnership with farming, environmental and development NGOs sent a cartoon to MEPs sitting on the agriculture, environment, budget, budgetary control, regional and development committees demanding greater coherence between the new CAP and other policies related to developing countries. The organisations called on MEPs to ensure that the new CAP supports sustainable production and fair prices for farmers and consumers and delivers environmentally sound farming policy which can contribute positively to global food security.
Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

1.2 Policy

Experts discuss environmental performance of organic agriculture

Experts from the organic sector and other stakeholders discussed the role of organic farming in increasing the environmental performance of European farming at an expert meeting on the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy on the 18 April. The meeting also examined the development of the EU Organic Regulation and European Commission’s plan to conduct an evaluation of the regulation. Other issues under discussion included organic poultry production and feedback from the 6th European Organic Congress.

IFOAM EU Group at meeting of Ministers for Environment

Director Marco Schlüter participated at a side-event before the Informal meeting of Ministers for Environment in Horsens, Denmark on April 18. Danish Environmental minister Ida Auken, and current Danish Council Presidency received a delegation of different NGOs to discuss the future 7th Environment Action Programme (EAP) – Towards a green economy and the Rio+20. IFOAM EU Group expressed its explicit support for a strong 7 EAP and highlighted the beneficial role of organic farming.

Call to organic farmers’ associations to join IFOAM EU Farmer sector group

With the aim of strengthening the voice of farmers within the IFOAM EU Group, a farmers’ sector group has been set up within the IFOAM EU Group. It was launched during the 6th European Organic Congress on 18 April. A steering group has been formed at this first meeting, with Jan Plagge (Bioland, DE) as chairman as well as Kees van Zel- deren (Biohuis, NL), Thomas Fertl (BioAustria, AT), Laurent Moinet (FNAB, FR) and Andrea Ferrante (AIAB, IT) as vice chairmen. The steering group will work in the coming months on more detailed objectives, working methods and an agenda of activities. Within one year time, formal elections will be organised to elect a longer term chairmanship.

Activities will include:

• Discussing and commenting on themes and procedures relevant for the organic farming sector

• Exchange of information

• To prepare positions and opinions for the IFOAM EU Group board and/or Executive board relevant to relevant farming EU policies (e.g. CAP/GMO), not only in the field of policy, but regulation and research as well

• Work on issues concerning the issue of advisory services/knowledge transfer

The sector group will cooperate on relevant topics with INOFO (Intercontinental Network of Organic Farmers Organisations) who is an IFOAM approved internal body on world level.

Membership is open to all members of IFOAM EU Group that are farming associations and cross-sectoral associations with farming as important sector in its work structure. Member organisations appoint a delegate for the sector group.

If you are interested in joining this group, please register here.
Short food supply chains in focus

The Commission Conference "Local agriculture and short food supply chains" held in Brussels on 20 April provided a platform for debate about appropriate policy frameworks to enable and encourage direct sales and local processing. Discussions centred on adapted food hygiene rules, possibilities of labelling these products and support through the Common Agricultural Policy.

IFOAM EU Group was present with several experts and highlighted the need of further improvements in the implementation of flexibility provisions for hygiene rules adapted to shorter supply chains, small scale processing and usually shorter shelf lives of local products. The role of organic farming and agro-ecological methods was highlighted as a means to raise environmental performance and market chances for farmers that target local markets. Moreover, IFOAM EU underlined that better support and advise under the CAP and appropriate policy frameworks are key to increase possibilities of gaining an income from local markets, whereas the Commission idea to introduce a new label for local products was assessed rather sceptical. IFOAM EU Group had a first discussion on the potentially upcoming EU label for local products on its board meeting on 19 April and will remain in dialogue on this subject.

The event was a joint initiative of Dacian Cioloș, European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, and John Dalli, European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy, who were both involved in the plenary discussions.

Further information and a video of the event can be found on the Commission website.
1.3 EU Research Policy/ TP Organics

FACCE Consultation on effects of climate change on agriculture

From January 26 to March 30 2012, the Food Security and Climate Change - Joint Programme Initiative (FACCE-JPI) launched an online consultation regarding the effects of climate change on agriculture. Joint programming is a concept introduced by the European Commission in July 2008 with the aim “to increase the value of relevant national and EU R&D funding by concerted and joint planning, implementation and evaluation of national research programmes”. TP Organics participated in this consultation process, as it is convinced that its visions and solutions provided a valuable and rather different approach.

The specific FACCE-JPI addressed “A detailed climate change risk assessment for European agriculture and food security, in collaboration with international projects”. Therefore, TP Organics highlighted the very important role of organic agriculture in meeting these challenges and emphasised different innovative approaches reaching from improved irrigation, waste management and pest control, resource efficiency and resource saving methods towards new approaches like eco-functional intensification, a broader understanding of innovation with more transdisciplinary and participatory research.

The outcomes of the consultation will be published on the FACCE-JPI website and will play a crucial part in developing their Strategic Research Agenda that will be published in 2012.

IFOAM EU Group Project “Agro-Ecological Innovation: from best practice exchange to policy frameworks”

With the European Innovation partnership (EIP) for agricultural productivity and sustainability, a completely new measure arise to encourage innovation and knowledge transfer in food and farming systems.

Within this framework, the project developed by the IFOAM EU Group in partnership with TP Organics and ARC 2020 and supported by Fondation de France, addresses the poor dissemination of knowledge and adoption of innovation and the lack of successful knowledge transfer. Its objectives are to create a network for agro-ecological knowledge management promoting the relevance of agro-ecological practices, and then to develop and disseminate recommendations for beneficial policy frameworks and instruments to foster agro-ecological innovation within EU agriculture, research and innovation policies. With these aims, the partners involved are also organizing a two days workshop the 11th and 12th of July, with scientists, SMEs and farm advisors. Finally, with this project, the project partners would like to build up a concept to transfer the agro-ecological network for knowledge management into a permanent knowledge management platform beyond 2012.

More news and information will follow shortly.
2. IFOAM EU Group Internal Updates

IFOAM EU Board Elects New Executive Board
The IFOAM EU Group elected a new Executive Board at its board meeting on the 19 April. Board members unanimously returned Christopher Stopes (UK) as President, Jose Luis Garcia Melgarejo (ES) as Treasurer, Sabine Eigenschink (AT) as Vice-President for regulation, Thomas Fertl as Vice-President for policy and Bavo van den Idsert (NL) as Vice-President with responsibility for processing. New members to the executive board include Alexander Gerber (DE) as Vice-President for research and Dorota Metera (PL) and Andrea Ferrante (IT) as Vice-Presidents. Board members also expressed their gratitude to the outgoing members Otto Schmid (CH), Thomas Dosch (DE) & Karolina Dytrova, for their services to the IFOAM EU Group.

Farewell to Regulation Trainee
Benny Van de Velde (BE) has finished his impressive stint as Regulation Trainee at the IFOAM EU Group office. Under the guidance of Regulation Coordinator, Andrzej Szeremeta, and aside of his daily regulation workload, Benny was essential in producing numerous IFOAM EU Group events including IFOAM EU meets business, CAP seminar and excursion in Lyon, Organic Processing Conference in Warsaw, BioFach 2012 in Nuremberg, and most recently with the 6th European Organic Congress in Denmark. We wish Benny the best of luck as he travels to Ghana to further educate individuals on organic food and farming, and what we can only assume, the good Belgian lifestyle!

IFOAM EU Group is accepting applications for Communications trainee position
The IFOAM EU Group is looking for a communications trainee to join our dynamic Brussels office. The length of the traineeship is 6 months and involve the overhaul of the IFOAM EU website, the production of publications as the newsletter and the setting up of different databases and a photo archive.

Take your chance for an interesting and qualifying experience in the political scene in Brussels!

More information on the traineeship can be found here.

To apply, please use this application form.

Please use the application form (found on our website) to apply for the Communication trainee position and return the filled-in form to communication@ifoam-eu.org.

Visit the IFOAM EU Group website for more information!

Deadline - 4 May 2012

(Benny Van de Velde (BE), IFOAM EU Group Regulation Trainee presenting in Lyon, France, impressing a crowded room of students)

(L-R) M. Schlüter, Alexander Gerber (DE), Dorota Metera (PL), Christopher Stopes (UK), Thomas Fertl (AT), Sabine Eigenschink (AT), Andrea Ferrante (IT), Bavo van den Idsert (NL)

Insert: Jose Luis Garcia Melgarejo (ES)
2.1 Sponsorship

Presentation of IFOAM EU Group Sponsor

**Aloja Starkelsen**

Aloja Starkelsen Ltd is Latvian-Swedish joint venture company founded in June 1991 as the first food enterprise in Latvia with foreign capital. Today it is the largest potato starch producer in the Baltic States. Lyckeby Culinar is a Swedish company that owns a Latvian subsidiary.

Since 2009 Aloja Starkelsen has started to produce Organic potato starch, and during past few years the production is growing rapidly. At the moment Aloja Starkelsen is already second biggest producer in Europe exporting the product to the EU and USA.

Aloja Starkelsen Organic potato starch is produced exclusively from potatoes grown in the organic farming in the Baltic region – Latvia and Estonia! Gluten-free organic potato starch is ideally suited to use in the food industry, as its water binding capacity is superior if compare to other starches. Potato starch is made through an extensive process of washing and then separating the starch present in potato cell walls so that it can be produced into powdered form.

For more information on organic potato starch produced in Aloja Starkelsen, visit the website: [http://www.baltorgpotato.com/product](http://www.baltorgpotato.com/product)

For more information regarding IFOAM EU sponsorship, please visit our webpage or contact us at communication@ifoam-eu.org
2.1 Sponsorship

Support IFOAM EU Group!

Next to membership fees, **sponsoring** is the only other financial input that can guarantee the carrying out of independent advocacy work and a proper presentation of the organic movement in Brussels.

To gain a wide number of sponsors, the IFOAM EU Group offers a variety of sponsorship options – there is at least one that fits to your needs.

All sponsor possibilities are summarised in a sponsor flyer, available in English, German, Italian, Spanish, French and Polish languages.

IFOAM EU Group will be pleased to jointly develop with you the best sponsoring option with you. Get in contact with us for the fine-tuning of your sponsor ideas:

*LenaWietheger@ifoam-eu.org*

Tel: +32 2 808 79 91

Key Sponsor Presentation

**IFOAM EU key sponsors 2012:**

**ARIZA, CAAE and ICEA/FECD**

ARIZA, CAAE and ICEA/FECD show their support for the work of IFOAM EU by a financial cooperation with IFOAM EU throughout the year 2012. Their money will be used to co-finance IFOAM EU events, projects and publications and is a highly valued contribution to our work.
3. Events

**7th Organic Marketing Forum 2012**
IFOAM EU Group is a patron of the upcoming *7th Organic Marketing Forum 2012*. The OMF will take place on the 7th -9th of May in Warsaw. The conference is an excellent place for business development, initial business contact and knowledge transfer. There will be pre-conference-workshops and excursions to organic farmers, processors and traders in the region outside of Warsaw.

**IFOAM EU and FoEE Upcoming Event on Crop Rotation and Legume Production**

The conference organised by the IFOAM EU Group, Friends of the Earth Europe (FoEE) and the Pesticide Action Network Europe (PANE), in association with Karin Kadenbach MEP (S&D Group) and Martin Häusling (Green/EFA Group), will explore how appropriate crop rotation and leguminous crop production measures can help to drive European farming towards a more sustainable and resource efficient path by increasing soil fertility, reducing dependency on protein crop imports and helping to balance nutrient cycles.

*Registration is now open.*

*Further information can be found on the IFOAM EU Group website.*

**New horizons for a sustainable and just society, June 26th Brussels**

In spring 2011, when the European Commission published its *green paper on the Common strategic framework for Research and Innovation* in preparation of the new European framework program Horizon 2020, an informal alliance of more than hundred civil society organisations from all over Europe denounced the dominant focus of the paper on industry and competitiveness. In an open letter to the European Commission and to the European Parliament, they had underlined that “The research that is prioritized and funded today will have a decisive impact on the future of our societies and our planet. It is imperative that the EU research framework is geared towards the needs of society and the environment rather than those of big business.” One year later, civil society organisations continue to work on the issue. In response to the *Horizon 2020 proposal* published by the EC in November 2011, and which is right now under consideration by the European Parliament, they invite members of the EP, representatives from the EC, from research institutions and from NGOs to join their event on Horizon 2020. Their conference on New horizons for a sustainable and just society will take place on June 26th in Brussels.

**Animation of rural development – a new profession? 7-9 June 2012, Crete,Greece**

This conference aims to promote discussion in the field of rural development, focusing especially on ways and means that rural development can be encouraged in disadvantaged or remote territories, in territories facing restructuring or in any other rural areas that lag behind in sustainable development. A key profession, that of the “rural animator” is introduced, as a focal player in the process of community encouragement and mediation towards the objective of sustainable development. The necessary qualifications for conducting such a profession in an efficient way are also considered for discussion and evaluation.

*http://www.emraconference.com/*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-6 May 2012</td>
<td><strong>BIOCULTURA</strong></td>
<td>Barcelona, Spain</td>
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<td>7-9 May 2012</td>
<td>7th Organic Marketing Forum 2012</td>
<td>Warsaw, Poland</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 May 2012</td>
<td>IFOAM EU and FoEE Upcoming Event on Crop Rotation and Legume Production</td>
<td>Brussels, Belgium</td>
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<td>7-9 June 2012</td>
<td>Animation of rural development – a new profession?</td>
<td>Crete, Greece</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 June 2012</td>
<td>New horizons for a sustainable and just society</td>
<td>Brussels, Belgium</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-24 August 2012</td>
<td>12th Congress of the European Society for Agronomy</td>
<td>Helsinki, Finland</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-14 September 2012</td>
<td>2nd IFOAM Animal Husbandry Conference</td>
<td>Hamburg, Germany</td>
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This newsletter exists to inform IFOAM members about the work of the IFOAM EU Group and its liaison and coordination office in Brussels. The IFOAM EU Group 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.

Information IFOAM EU Group:
http://www.ifoam-eu.org

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