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Dear readers,

After the usual August break, work at the EU institutions is now back in full force. Nevertheless, IFOAM EU Group was busy lobbying for organic farming and food during the summer too. The organic regulation team, including myself as vice president for this area, was and will continue to focus on the review of the organic regulation announced by the European Commission. The European Commission has already published a report, conducted a public survey and will hold three hearings this autumn with an exclusive group of experts and stakeholders. We are happy to be part of this group and to represent the views of the organic sector. This review will keep IFOAM EU Group busy for the next two to three years.

This review is quite an extensive process and will bind a significant amount of capacity throughout the European organic sector, not to mention costing quite some money. Although we still have doubts about the timing of the launch – is it the right time to start such a process just four years after the new organic regulation was put into force? – we do hope that this initiative will help the organic sector once the process has been finalized!

So far we have seen that inspection and control, as well as their potential to improve, will be important topics for the Commission. IFOAM EU will soon publish a position paper on the new import regime and on control, discussing the problems that are likely to arise or have already manifested themselves as a result of this new system for placing non-EU organic products on the EU internal market. The equivalence agreement between the EU and USA published during BioFach last February is an important implementation. Since the publication of the agreement, quite a few obstacles, problems and instances of misleading language were discovered by the sector. IFOAM EU uses its excellent contacts to get these problems heard by and fed into the discussions between EU officials and American officials.

In addition to the regulation review, current regulation work at IFOAM EU Group is finding a compromise on the organic production in substrates. We hope to reach one this autumn and to add the developments to the existing IFOAM EU position paper on greenhouse production, which will be presented to the European Commission as part of the process of developing EU greenhouse standards. A process which the Commission is supposed to start by the end of the year.

Internally IFOAM EU is reviewing its structure and procedures, as past discussions and decision making processes – mainly in the area of regulation – have shown a need to analyse existing procedures and to improve them.

It’s clear, both in terms of content and procedure, IFOAM EU is working hard to bring our core matter forward: contributing to a sound basis for organic food and farming in Europe as the foundation for sustainable agriculture in Europe – for the sake of consumers, organic operators and the environment.

Sabine Eigenschink,
IFOAM EU Vice President of Regulation
POLITICAL HOTSPOT

Organic Days in Cyprus

From 24 to 26 September, the Organic Days gathered around 100 participants in Larnaca, Cyprus. Organised by IFOAM EU, TP Organics, Pasbybio – the Cypriot organic association, the European Commission and the Cyprus Presidency of the EU Council, the event offered the organic sector and wider civil society the opportunity to discuss the future of European agricultural and research policy with researchers and representatives of the European Commission.

The Organic Days started with an excursion to historical and cultural places of the island of Cyprus emblematic of agriculture and rural society. One of the most interesting examples demonstrated the links between organic agriculture and social responsibility. The therapeutic community of Agia Skepi is a place where former drug addicts cultivate and cook organic products. They have the prestige of opening the first certified organic bakery on the island.

The second organic day focused on: “Organic and Low-input Agriculture. Implementing Innovation to respond to EU challenges.” At the occasion of the conference, the Commission presented a catalogue of 49 EU research projects on low-input and organic agriculture funded in the 2000-2012 period. Bram Moeskops, rapporteur for TP Organics, stated that innovation in the organic food and farming sector is not only essential to safeguard the competitiveness of the sector, it will also drive the entire agricultural sector towards more sustainability. He also said that innovation efforts should include the expertise of all food chain stakeholders, meaning that researchers should engage with practitioners starting from the very identification of research needs. Specifically, the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) “Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability” – which will have a significant impact on the future agriculture research agenda – must ensure a participatory approach. Speakers suggested several topics to be included in the EIP, such as participatory plant breeding, the design of agroforestry systems for better nutrient efficiency, and the development of processing methods that preserve the original quality of the raw materials.

On the third day, policy makers and experts discussed the topic of: “Future agricultural policies in times of climate change and water scarcity: Rural development and sustainable farming approaches for Mediterranean areas and beyond.” In his welcome speech, Louis
Tsangarides, outlined the priorities of the Cyprus presidency for the CAP reform. He stated that the general aim of the CAP should be to design and implement effective rural development policies that take into account climate change and other environmental challenges, through integrating food production, local processing and marketing, organic agriculture and quality schemes. Unfortunately, the Cypriot Minister of Agriculture Sofoclis Aletraris, who was scheduled to give the opening speech, was unable to attend due to a change in flight schedule.

Climate change was recognized as a major global challenge, which is already having a negative impact on European agriculture particularly in southern and Mediterranean areas such as Cyprus. Speakers analyzed the potential of organic farming to mitigate climate change and foster adaptation, as it increases carbon sequestration and improves water retention capacity in soil. It was also mentioned that organic agriculture, as a sustainable development model, is still growing in the European agricultural area and combining organic with tourism could revitalize rural areas and promote local organic food. Speakers also suggested that the full implementation of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and a green Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) should be mandatory to protect European agriculture against water scarcity and droughts.

IFOAM EU Group is very grateful to the Cyprus EU Presidency, the European Commission, TP Organics and the Cypriot organic association Pasybio for their part in the organisation of the Organic Days.
1. NEWS FROM IFOAM EU WORKING FIELDS

1.1. Organic Regulation

**Review of the organic regulation**
At the beginning of 2012, the European Commission announced a review of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007. The three main steps of the process are:

- **Commission report on the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007.** Provided to the Council and to the European Parliament in May 2012, it treats issues such as the scope of the regulation, the prohibition of the use of GMOs and the functioning of the internal market and control system.

- **Stakeholder consultation.** Three hearings have been organised by the Commission to take place in September, October and November 2012. Representatives of IFOAM EU Group will use these meetings to provide the sector’s input on the regulation review. The Commission plans on holding an additional online consultation before 13 February 2013.

- **Evaluation of the organic regulation.** Evaluation of the existing regulation has been subcontracted to an external body, a consortium led by the German Thünen Institute and includes the Organic Research Centre (UK), FiBL (CH), Oreade Breche (FR), IEEP (UK) and several national experts.

The review could lead to a legal proposal from the European Commission to amend the organic regulation by the end of 2013.

**IFOAM EU Group meets the new Head of Organic Farming Unit at DG AGRI**
On September 12, an IFOAM EU Group delegation led by president Christopher Stopes met Mr. João Onofre, the new Head of the European Commission’s Organic Farming Unit. Mr. Stopes presented the important role IFOAM EU plays in the organic sector and introduced our major points of work to the new head of unit including: imports, controls, flexibilities, poultry and greenhouse rules. We look forward to working with Mr. Onofre, who is very keen on his new position.

**IFOAM EU Group letters on EU-US organic equivalence agreement**
IFOAM EU group has sent two letters to the Commission communicating the concerns that have been raised after the EU-US equivalence agreement came into force on 1 June 2012. The **first letter**, sent on 25 July 2012, provided details on the control procedures set in EU for organic livestock operations and the possibility to easily separate animals treated with antibiotics from those that are not. The purpose is to ensure that EU organic livestock products will be allowed to be exported to the US. The **second letter**, sent on 19 September 2012, presented multiple areas of concern for trade between the two parties, because of differences in regulations governing inputs, pesticide residues, GMO control, labelling and export from third countries to the US.

**Pesticide guidelines by IFOAM EU Group and EOCC**
At an event on September 13 and 14, the European Organic Certifiers Council (EOCC) launched the **public consultation** process for its new Pesticide Residues Guideline: “Managing Pesticide Residues in Organic Products”, open from September 13 to November 15. This event included a seminar on the EOCC guideline for certification bodies and the public presentation of the guideline is expected to occur during BioFach 2013.
IFOAM EU Group published a **Guideline for Pesticide Residue Contamination for International Trade in Organic** in August 2011. The two guideline documents have a lot of similarities: while IFOAM EU Group takes more of an operators’ perspective, the EOCC focuses on the certifiers’ point of view.

IFOAM EU Group is preparing its input for the EOCC consultation and will discuss the integration of both approaches with the EOCC. We expect to update the IFOAM EU Group guideline by the end of the year.

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**Report from the Advisory Group on Organic Farming**

During the last Advisory Group on Organic Farming (AGOF) of 13 September 2012, the chair Mr. Christopher Stopes welcomed Mr. João Onofre to his new position as Head of the Organic Farming Unit. The main topics discussed during the AGOF were the review process of the organic regulation and the possible changes to Annex I and II of Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008, which will be discussed during the next Standing Committee on Organic Farming (SCOF). Discussions are still ongoing concerning the proper definition of the term “factory farming” used in the regulation and currently interpreted differently depending on the Member State.

The Commission has communicated that the reports from the Expert Group for Technical Advice in Organic Production (EGTOP) on organic poultry and on food have been received and will soon be publically available. EGTOP’s work on organic greenhouse production will be postponed slightly – probably to the end of 2012 or the beginning of 2013.

The IFOAM EU Group presented its position that **environmental performance indicators** for organic processing should be included in the European Organic Regulations.

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**Consolidated versions of the European Organic Regulations**


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**Next Standing Committee on Organic Farming**

On 2-3 October, the Standing Committee on Organic Farming (SCOF) will meet. The main topics on the agenda are the implementing rules, in particular the working documents on Annex I and II of Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008, on annex III and IV of Commission regulation 1235/2008 and on the proposal for amendments as regards supervision and controls. A discussion on the implementation of Article 92a (publication of lists of operators) has also been scheduled. Another important topic will be the import regime, with an update on possible agreements with China and Korea.
Organic Wine
On 1 August, Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 203/2012 came into force. From then on organic wines in the EU can legally be called “organic wine” rather than “wine made with organic grapes”, as was previously the case. Starting with the 2012 harvest, the EU organic logo must be displayed on all wine bottles sold as organic. This new regulation closes the gap that previously existed between the European Organic Regulations and other organic regulations like the US NOP and Canadian COR regulations which did provide for organic wine.

Today, after years of discussions, the process of winemaking is included in the scope of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/07. The new implementing regulation details specific rules for the making of organic wine. This includes the use of certain products and substances, oenological practices and restrictions, rules for wine labelling and the retroactive recognition of stored wines.

The maximum sulphur dioxide content for the different kinds of wine is established and the substances permitted in organic winemaking activity are listed in annex VIIIa. In total, 44 substances are permitted, 24 fewer than allowed under the Common Market Organisation. As it is a new regulation, the inclusion of wine in the equivalence agreements with third countries – in particular the US and Canada – is not yet very clear and several details still have to be discussed. Argentina, already among the equivalent third countries included in Commission Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008, has asked the Commission for an extension to cover organic wine.

Introduction of National Organic Textile Standards in India
India is the first country in the world that has introduced a mandatory National Organic Textile Standard (NOTS). This standard follows the Global Organic Textiles Standards (GOTS), the standard that covers the complete process from harvesting to labelling of textiles made from organic fibre, cotton and wool.

Nevertheless, the GOTS international working group has raised its concerns on the additional financial and administrative costs related to NOTS certification that may be passed on to the GOTS-certified Indian textile producers and also pointed out that the NOTS standards and certification requirements have not been yet fully defined. India has started to discuss equivalency of its NOTS standards with Canada and Japan. Even though India is one of the 11 equivalent third countries in the eyes of European Commission regulation, no equivalence for textiles can be discussed as the EU has not yet developed any standards for the certification of organic textiles.
GMOs

200 participants discussed strategies for a GMO-free Europe

The 7th European GMO-free regions conference took place on 4-5 September in Brussels. With half a day of workshops to discuss and share knowledge about GMO-related issues such as GMO risk assessment, authorisation procedures, research, patents and beekeeping, and a full day of public debates in the European Parliament, the conference attracted over 200 participants. Paul Holmbeck from Organic Denmark represented the IFOAM EU Group giving a speech in the European Parliament explaining the contamination risks and prevention costs of GMO cultivation for organic and other GMO-free food production. He called for protection of the GMO-free sector and for the socio-economic risks to be included in the GMO risk assessment procedures. IFOAM EU Group research coordinator Bram Moeskops presented the joint ARC2020, TP organics and IFOAM EU project on agro-ecological innovation. The upcoming seed legislation and the future of GMO-free seed were discussed in workshops moderated by policy manager Antje Kölling, who underlined the importance of the availability of GMO-free seed and a diversity of plant varieties for future food security.
ENVIRONMENT

Climate change policy
On 30 August 2012, IFOAM EU Group attended a stakeholder meeting organized by the European Commission to discuss the Commission proposal on greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting for land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF). The Commission proposal was published in March of this year and was criticised by some Member States for going beyond the Durban climate agreement as it makes accounting for grassland management and cropland management mandatory for Member States. They are sceptical of this accounting system and fear additional work load. However, the Commission explains that the new accounting rules would only imply systematic compilation of data that is already collected anyway.

At the meeting IFOAM EU Group Policy Manager, Antje Koelling, welcomed the Commission proposal. She pointed out that transparency on GHG-emission sources is crucial to the success of measures combating GHG emissions from agriculture. With regard to the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, she said that ambitious policy steps to finally reduce GHG emissions must be implemented and a comprehensive approach towards climate change mitigation and sustainability must be adopted. Organic farming with its high potential to contribute to climate change mitigation, adaptation and to a broad range of sustainability goals should be a leading model. An agreement on the Commission proposal is expected by the end of 2012.
COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY (CAP)

Good Food March calls for a radical reform of the CAP

Hundreds of farmers and citizens from across Europe, including representatives from the IFOAM EU Group, descended on Brussels on the 19th September to call for radical change to the EU’s food and farming policy as part of the Good Food March campaign. Demanding fairer and greener farming, support for sustainable family farms – especially organic farming systems, fair prices for farmers, a bottom-up approach to rural development policy, increased cultivation of local protein crops rather than large scale imports and an end to food speculation, the broad coalition of civil society organisations and individuals visited each of the EU Institutions to present decision-makers with a book of over 1000 portraits and written messages from EU citizens outlining their vision for the reform of the CAP. The March concluded at the European Parliament with a Good Food Brunch in which marchers met with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to outline their key demands. At the Brunch IFOAM EU board members Jan Plagge (DE) and Albena Simeonova (BG) challenged MEPs to shift the CAP towards a more sustainable path with organic food and farming systems prioritised as pioneering models. The march in Brussels represented the final day of a month-long journey for many marchers who travelled by bicycle and tractor from Germany, Austria, France the Netherlands and Belgium to demand real change. During the march farmers and non-farming citizens organised a series of national and regional events across the EU calling on decision-makers to make radical steps to decisively change EU food and farming policy. In a joint press release issued with other civil society groups on this occasion, IFOAM EU challenged the European Parliament to show leadership and ensure an inclusive and open process that takes into account the opinions of all parliamentarians and all relevant Committees.
1.2. Policy

**JAN PLAGGE (on the left)**
**GERMAN BOARD MEMBER OF IFOAM EU GROUP**
“This CAP reform is a real opportunity to shift EU food and agriculture policy towards a more sustainable path. Through the Good Food March civil society has spoken. It is now up to decision-makers to place sustainability at the heart of new CAP by decisively supporting sustainable farming systems such as organic farming that can help to respond to the needs of farmers and society.”

**ALBENA SIMEONOVA**
**BULGARIAN FARMER AND BOARD MEMBER OF IFOAM EU GROUP**
“The Good Food March has helped to increase citizen’s awareness about the need for more sustainable food and farming in Europe and to remind decision-makers that business as usual is no longer an option. We need to ensure a comprehensive greening of the CAP and support for organic farming to make this need a reality. We are fighting to save rural areas and make them attractive places to live.”

**EMMA HOCKRIDGE**
**SOIL ASSOCIATION, IFOAM EU MEMBER**
“It was hugely inspiring to feel the great solidarity for the aims of the march and the following events from fellow citizens from all over Europe. It felt like the Commission and the Parliament were really listening to our calls for good food and farming. I hope that we see this put into action in the future.”
1.2. Policy

**Good Food March in Luxembourg**

In Luxembourg, natur&ëmwelt, Bio-Lëtzebuerg and Greenpeace took charge of organising the Good Food March. They set up an internet platform to help actively promote change in agricultural policies in Luxembourg and the EU.

**Farmers and citizens can continue to call for Good Food and Good Farming**

The Good Food March saw over a 1000 farmers and EU citizens highlight their demands for a real reform of the CAP through the Good Food March Photo Action. This Campaign will carry on with the Good Food Marcher initiators, including the IFOAM EU Group, encouraging all farmers and citizens across the EU to send photos highlighting to their decision-makers that they want a CAP that is truly about Good Food and Good Farming in Europe. Photo messages can be sent to photo@goodfoodmarch.eu or for further information log on to the Good Food March Photo Action.

From left to right: Peter Weichert (Fairtrade Initiative Saarbrücken), Daniela Noesen (Bio-Lëtzebuerg), Biggi Möhrle (Good Food March), Maurice Losch (Greenpeace), Romain Schneider (Minister of Agriculture), Raymond Aendekerk (IFOAM EU Board Member, Bio-Lëtzebuerg), Iris Kieffer (‘Meine Landwirtschaft’ campaign), François Benoy (natur&ëmwelt), André van den Dries (Ministry of Agriculture)
IFOAM EU calls for strong funding for rural development post-2013

Strong funding for rural development post-2013 must be prioritised under the next CAP reform according to Jan Plagge, Chair of the IFOAM EU Farmer Sector Group. Addressing the Socialist MEP Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, rapporteur for direct payments and rural development at the CAP Reform 2020 conference in the European Parliament, he called on the rapporteur to take into account the danger of placing risk-management measures and income stabilisation tools under rural development as they could have major negative impact on measures that increase environmental delivery, including organic farming.

Elsewhere Emma Hockridge from the Soil Association outlined her vision for a CAP reform that promotes more sustainable food and agriculture systems such as organic farming, to help resolve many of the challenges facing EU agriculture.

A conference took place in the European Parliament on 19 September and was organised by Slow Food in partnership with the ARC 2020 platform. Farmers, citizens and civil society organisations from across EU Member States debated with the EU Commissioner Dacian Cioloș, Egly Pantelaki from Cypriot EU Presidency and key Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) on the future of the CAP. As the MEPs begin to formulate the position of the European Parliament on the CAP post-2013, civil society organisations call for transparency in the CAP decision-making process. The ARC2020 platform called on the Parliament to put the CAP reports to Plenary for a vote of MEPs ahead of negotiations with the European Council.

IFOAM EU Group at the EU Informal Rural Development Directors’ meeting

An informal meeting of Rural Development directors under Cypriot presidency was held on 27 September in Limassol, Cyprus, to discuss future funding models of the LEADER measure under the future Rural Development programmes. IFOAM EU Group president Christopher Stopes was invited to present the results of the Organic Days (see article above). As directors and officials in the rural development units of the national and regional ministries have to implement the new rural development fund, he focussed on the organic sector’s demands for the promotion of organic farming in the framework of rural development. Addressing the delegations of Rural Development Directors from the 27 Member States and the European Commission, Stopes stated: “Innovation in organic food and farming is not only essential to safeguarding the competitiveness of the organic sector, it will also drive the whole agricultural sector towards more sustainability.” He concluded that research and innovation needs to involve all actors in the food chain as it relies on broad expertise, therefore the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) “Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability” must ensure a participatory approach to foster knowledge exchange, to use the innovation potential of farmers and to enhance sustainability in the food chain. A paradigm shift is needed, away from focusing purely on technical innovation and on productivity towards “sufficiency” and a broader understanding of innovation. Mediterranean rural areas are already highly affected by the consequences of climate change, with increasing water scarcity and droughts. Organic farming provides great potential for climate change mitigation and adaptation as it increases carbon sequestration and improves water retention capacity in soils.

For the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) he therefore drew the conclusion that the CAP needs a substantial reform if it is to help our food chain become fit for future challenges. Only significant greening and the recognition
of organic farming in the first pillar, in combination with a financially stronger second pillar, can provide the basis for moving farming towards sustainability. The rural development fund must set the guidelines for further progress by linking 50% of funding to sustainability and by fostering a coherent framework for organic farming: support for conversion and maintenance, and for making organic a priority under measures such as marketing, investments, cooperation, advisory services and diversification. IFOAM EU Group Director Marco Schlüter and Policy Manager Antje Kölling were also present and took advantage of the occasion to discuss ongoing and future policy developments around the CAP and European Innovation Partnerships with decision-makers.

Council and Parliament discuss cut to CAP budget post-2013

European and Foreign Affairs Ministers remained divided over the final outcome of the EU Budget 2014-2020 at the General Affairs Council on 24 September, with a number of Member States calling for the CAP budget not to be cut, while a number of Member States also call for a strong rural development budget with no cuts below current funding levels. In the lead up to the meeting, the Cypriot EU Presidency published a paper with suggested revisions to the ‘Negotiating Box’ for the EU Budget 2014-2020, which could reduce the percentage for the greening component under direct payments from the current figure of 30%, and increase flexibility for the shifting money between direct payments & market measures (pillar 1) and rural development (pillar 2). Increased flexibility would allow Member States to voluntarily increase the percentage of pillar 1 funding they move to pillar 2 (currently 10%). However Member States which have direct payments below the EU average could be allowed to increase the percentage of pillar 2 funding diverted to pillar 1 (currently 5%), putting added strain on an already diminishing rural development budget. In addition, the revisions scrap the idea of using money raised from capping direct payments for the largest beneficiaries to support innovation.

The European Parliament’s Agriculture Committee has called for the CAP budget to be frozen in real terms rather than nominal terms as proposed by the Commission in its Opinion to Parliament’s Budget Committee, which is preparing its report on the EU Budget.

The EU Budget will be agreed by all Member States and must have the consent of the European Parliament. Discussions on the ‘Negotiating Box’ come under the remit of the General Affairs Council who will continue to discuss the EU budget with EU heads of government. A final deal is expected this November or December.

Agriculture Ministers propose diverging solutions to challenges faced by European farming

Water management was a major point of discussion at the Informal Agriculture Council in Nicosia, Cyprus on 9-11 September, with diverging solutions to protect natural resources, respond to climate change and limit land abandonment proposed by Agriculture Ministers. At the meeting which focused on food production, renewables and public goods, with an emphasis on climate change, water and soil, some Member States called for greater innovation and the use of biotechnologies to address decreasing water supplies and soil degradation. Other member states stressed the need to address urban expansion on agricultural land, enhance education and training for farmers and ensure the high quality of water supplies. In a press release the IFOAM EU Group called on European Farm Ministers to ensure that the CAP budget is used effectively to
shift towards sustainable food systems, particularly in light of the current economic crisis and ongoing threat to our natural resources. IFOAM EU also challenged the Ministers to recognise the potential of organic farming systems to deliver sustainability benefits under the new CAP. At the Agriculture Council on the 24-25 September, the Agriculture Ministers also voiced their concerns about the implementation of new criteria for areas of natural constraint (formerly less favoured areas) under rural development programmes and safety net mechanisms proposed under the reform of the Single Common Market Organisation (CMO).

Agriculture Committee begin negotiations on CAP Reports
Agriculture Committee rapporteurs and shadow rapporteurs for the CAP reports in the European Parliament have begun negotiations following the tabling of approximately 7,000 amendments on the CAP legislative package. The negotiations will also take into account Opinion Reports by the relevant Committees such as the Environment, Regional and Development Committees. IFOAM EU Group is currently reviewing relevant amendments and is calling on MEPs to ensure that the decision-making process in the Parliament is open and transparent. As the lead committee on the CAP legislative package for the European Parliament, the Agriculture Committee is planning a preliminary vote on either 5 or 6 November or by 26 or 27 November. Agriculture Ministers are expected to agree a partial general approach in November or December before negotiations open up between the Council, Parliament and Commission.

European Parliament Environmental Committee calls for greener CAP
Members of the Environment Committee have called for a holistic approach to the greening of the CAP for both direct payments and rural development in opinions issued on Direct Payments (pillar 1) and Rural Development (pillar 2). In the Reports the Committee calls for a stronger greening component under direct payments including crop rotation, the protection of permanent pasture, soil cover as well as the option for collective approaches to maintain and develop ecological infrastructure.

The Committee rejected the need for Member States to shift money from pillar 2 to pillar 1. Instead it calls on member states to shift a certain percentage of pillar 1 funding to pillar 2, with the possibility to increase that percentage each year during the programming period. The Committee has also called for mandatory minimum spending for environmental measures including organic farming and the development of programmes to tackle environmental challenges and promote high nature value (HNV) farming by encouraging member states to combine relevant measures. Some Members of the European Parliament have also called for the prioritisation of sustainable farming, including organic farming across rural development programmes.

European agronomists call for crop rotation under the new CAP
The European Society for Agronomy (ESA), representing over 300 scientists from across the EU has called on decision-makers to support more effective and sustainable cropping systems under the greening of direct payments. In an open statement, the scientists point to the wide range of long-term agronomic and economic benefits of crop rotation over crop diversification. They add that crop diversification will not have a major impact on influencing farming practice and will fail to effectively achieve the overall greening goals proposed under CAP reform.
AGRO ECOLOGICAL INNOVATION PROJECT

Influence research policy
TP Organics, IFOAM EU and ARC2020 have the pleasure of inviting you to the closing event of the Agro-Ecological Innovation project on 15 November at the European Parliament Information Office in Brussels, Belgium.

Best practices of agro-ecological innovation and the policy recommendations developed during the project will be presented and there will be a debate with Members of the European Parliament and Commission representatives on how agro-ecological research should be integrated into the new research policy framework.

For more information please visit the project’s website.

An extensive database of agro-ecological innovation and knowledge transfer initiatives will be online mid-October.

Contribute your best practices!
Promote your ideas and help the whole agro-ecological community benefit.

Have you developed...
...a new technology?
...improved methods for soil or water management?
...better cultivation techniques?
...new food processing methods?

Have you found any new and effective ways to...
...engage consumers
...or to share your knowledge with others?

If so, please let us know!

All innovative ideas are welcome, as long as they follow agro-ecological principles. This means encouraging prudent use of natural resources and contributing to the fair development of rural and urban areas.

Please send your contributions (description of max. 200 words plus contact details) to: agro-eco.innovation@tporganics.eu
**FACCE-JPI Stakeholder Advisory Board**
Marco Schlüter, IFOAM EU director and head of the TP Organic secretariat, was elected to be one of three vice chairs during the first Joint Programming Initiative – Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change (FACCE-JPI) Stakeholder Advisory Board. The chairperson represents COPA-COGECA.

The FACCE-JPI brings together Member States, in order to align research and innovation efforts.

http://www.faccejpi.com

**UPDATE ON HORIZON 2020**

TP Organics is busy lobbying for the Horizon 2020 amendments. On 17 and 18 September two important events took place: the Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) Committee had an exchange of opinions and the Environmental Committee voted on its final recommendation. TP Organics sent a memorandum stressing the importance of including organic principles in the new framework programme for research and innovation to both Committees.

The final vote of the ITRE Committee has been set for the end of October and the plenary will probably vote at the end of the year.

TP Organics will continue to monitor the political process and intervene when desirable.
2. IFOAM EU GROUP OFFICE & INTERNAL STRUCTURE

NEW COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT
LAURA ULLMANN (US)
Where food comes from and how it is made has been important to me for a long time. At the age of 11, I became a vegetarian because I was against the unethical treatment of animals reared for food, even though I grew up nowhere near animals in the big city of New York. I’ve been living in Belgium for nine years and am active in the Belgian GASAP movement supporting local farmers working according to ecologically, socially and economically sound methods. Prior to joining IFOAM EU, I was a Manager in the Markets and Marketing Department at KPMG where I developed communications, marketing and business development skills. I am very happy to be joining the IFOAM EU Group and am looking forward to fulfilling my communications and fundraising responsibilities.

NEW PROJECT ASSISTANT
ANN-KATHRIN TRAPPENBERG (DE)
I come from a small town in the German state of Baden-Württemberg, where the production of wine is the dominant form of agriculture. I studied Political and Administrative Science at the University of Konstanz, and have a Master’s in European Studies from the University of Hamburg. I started working in the field of European project management in Berlin, before coming to Brussels to work at an Executive Agency, where I was involved in selecting and managing European projects for the Commission’s Lifelong Learning Programme. I am very happy to join the IFOAM EU Group; it gives me the possibility to be more involved in the content of European projects and to combine my personal beliefs on sustainable agriculture with my work.

POLICY ASSISTANT TERESA
PRACTICAL FARM TRAINING
From 20-23 August 2012, I worked as a trainee at La Ferme du Vieux Gibet, an organic and biodynamic farm located in Soignies, Belgium. Joëlle and Ghislain have a diversified farm of about 38 ha where grassland (for their 23 dairy cows), wheat and spelt (for flour) and vegetables grow without any external input except for biodynamic preparations. I thank Joëlle who kindly shared four days of hard work, future projects (construction of a mill and a place for selling home-made organic jam and ice-cream), her knowledge of anthroposophy, her unlimited respect for nature and her interesting point of view about some crucial issues for the organic sector today: the Kokopelli case, the future of European farmers, the necessity of more ethics in organic business and the climate change challenge.
**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 will fit your needs!

The IFOAM EU Group will be pleased to jointly develop with you the best sponsoring option with you. An excellent way of gaining recognition on a European level for 2012 is supporting the **IFOAM EU-FiBL-AOEL Processors’ Conference in November 2012**. Get in contact with us for the fine-tuning of your sponsor ideas:

**LenaWietheger@ifoam-eu.org**
Tel: +32 2 808 79 91

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**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.

The Spanish non-profit organisation CAAE is the IFOAM EU Group association of the month for August and September 2012 and is presented on the **IFOAM EU website**.

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**IFOAM EU Sponsorship in Action!**

Sponsorship awards at the 6th European Organic Congress

5th European Organic Congress

Processing Conference, 2011
**EVENTS**

### 4. Review of events

**IFOAM EU in CAP jubilee in Brussels**

On Sunday 16 September, car-free day, the tenth edition of *Bruxelles Champêtre* took place in Brussels. This year the event coincided with the 50th anniversary of the CAP and the European Commission set up an exhibition area to inform the public of the objectives reached in the last few years, and gave a short introduction to the new reform currently underway. The Commissioner for agriculture and rural development, Dacian Cioloş, opened the event with a speech for young people and students.

To add the Organic perspective, IFOAM EU Group had a stand in the exhibition space, next to other European agricultural stakeholders. IFOAM EU also organised for a pasta theatre: an actress taught people way how to make homemade organic tagliatelle in a relaxing and funny way, while also explaining the benefits of supporting and consuming organic products in daily life.

**Organic Day at Wessanen**

On September 7, the multinational company Wessanen held its first “Organic Day” at three of its European locations: Germany, France and the Netherlands. The aim of the event was to inform Wessanen employees about organic food and farming and to strengthen their commitment to organics. IFOAM EU Group director Marco Schlüter joined the Organic Day at Wessanen’s headquarters in Amsterdam and gave a presentation on IFOAM EU Group’s mission and work.
4.2. Preview of events

IFOAM EU meets business

The 3rd IFOAM EU meets business event will be held in Brussels on 15 October. In co-operation with AOEL, BioForum and VBP, IFOAM EU GROUP is organising an open dialogue with representatives of the organic business sector on matters related to the organic food markets, the EU organic regulation and future cooperation. Mr. João Onofre, Head of the Organic Farming Unit will attend the event and will present a review of the Organic Regulation (EC) No 834/2007. Before the meeting participants have the opportunity to visit the European Parliament.

Registration for the event is still open. If you are interested in participating please contact Dimitrios Petalios by email: dimitrios.petalios@ifoa-m-eu.org.

EduOFP project meeting in Netherlands

The meeting of the European Education Concept and Forum for Organic Food Processors (EduOFP) project will take place on 2-3 October in the Netherlands. Representatives of organic food processing and IFOAM EU SGOP members will discuss the educational aspects of organic food processing.

Natura Food fair in Łodź, Poland and IFOAM EU Group Conference

During the Natura Food Fair in Łodź, Poland, IFOAM EU Group will hold a Conference on the Quality and Promotion of Organic Products. Key topics of the conference are: EU organic regulation and its future development, monitoring of the pesticides residues on organic and conventional products and the development of organic markets. IFOAM EU Group would like to invite organic companies from Central Eastern Europe to attend the conference and workshop.

Nordic Conference on quality organic food in public kitchens

The Copenhagen House of Food is organising a Nordic conference to pursue an aggressive agenda for better quality and increased organic food in the public sector on November 27-28, 2012 in Copenhagen. During the two-day conference lectures and workshops will focus on the various aspects of introducing and employing high quality organic products in public kitchens, as well as the position of organic products in Green Public Procurement.

Organic farmers meet in Brussels on 14-15 November

The IFOAM EU Farmer Sector Group will meet in Brussels on 14-15 November 2012. Participants will discuss the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, upcoming changes in organic regulation, and outline future activities and events. For more information and to register please contact stephen.meredith@ifom-foam.eu.org.
### 4.3. Calendar of events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 October</td>
<td>Quality and promotion of organic products IFOAM EU Group Conference during Natura Food 2012. Łódź, Poland</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 October</td>
<td>IFOAM EU Group meets business</td>
<td>Brussels, Belgium</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 November</td>
<td>The potential of agro-ecology: Reclaiming the food crisis</td>
<td>European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 November</td>
<td>Dissemination event as part of the Agro-ecological innovation project</td>
<td>Brussels, Belgium</td>
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<tr>
<td>26-27 November</td>
<td>Processing Conference</td>
<td>Frankfurt, Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>27-28 November</td>
<td>Nordic Conference - A new Nordic agenda for quality organic food in public kitchens</td>
<td>Copenhagen, Denmark</td>
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Marching for Good Food and Farming: IFOAM EU Board Member Albena Simeonova (2nd from right) and Communication Assistant Laura Ullmann (3rd from right)

The IFOAM EU Group acknowledges the financial support of the European Community, DG Environment throughout the year 2012. The sole responsibility lies with the IFOAM EU Group, and the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided by IFOAM EU Group.

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.

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Please send any comments or contributions to the newsletter to communication@ifoam-eu.org.
For further information contact your national board member or the office in Brussels.