Newsletter No 59, November 2012
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements EU Group – IFOAM EU Group
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Welcome note

Dear reader,

November is a time when we begin analysing what we have achieved in the past year and what we would like to achieve in the year ahead. As we begin this process, I celebrate IFOAM EU’s broad representation of a wide range of stakeholders in the whole organic sector throughout Europe. We work hard to extend our network even further – to reach more people and meet their needs more effectively.

The IFOAM EU Group works to support the organic sector in many ways, let me give some examples that reveal the range of our work. Our Specialist Group on Organic Processing (SGOP) has developed proposals for the improvement of environmental performance in organic food businesses to complement the environmental protection delivered by organic farmers through organic production standards. We are now lobbying for their inclusion in the organic regulation. With the ongoing changes in the implementing rules and annexes of the organic regulation, our work ensures that we present well-informed and relevant positions that really do make a difference. The launch of the Organic Farmers Sector Group in 2012 will help us to strengthen the voice of organic farmers and enable us to better represent farmers’ interests in the vital debate on CAP reform. There are many more examples of how IFOAM EU Group’s work delivers vital services that support the growth of the many and diverse organic sector stakeholders.

But there is still much to do! The ongoing organic regulation review and CAP reform present urgent challenges to the sector as 2012 draws to a close and we plan our work for 2013. We are committed to lobbying and advocating for the interests of organic food and farming in every way we can. But to quote an old adage, there’s strength in numbers. For IFOAM EU and for those active in organics in Europe this is true both in terms of the number of people and organisations who get involved, and in terms of the amount of money available. The large conventional food and agro-industry trade associations are receiving significant funding from the world’s major food, chemical and pharmaceutical companies to protect their own interests and to further strengthen a food and farming system that is increasingly seen not to meet the challenges of today.

If you’re not already involved, the movement needs you too!

- Become a member and participate in our work groups that contribute to relevant regulations
- Give a donation
- Sponsor our work as a whole or a specific project, event or publication

Not only will you contribute to the development of the sector and protect your interests at a European level, your involvement will also help you develop your organic network and brand image across Europe.

For more details on what you can do, contact us as communications@ifoam-eu.org or +32 808 7991.

I look forward our shared success in 2013.

Christopher Stopes, President of IFOAM EU Group

‘Proud to be part of it’ – that is really how I’ve experienced the intensive cooperation with IFOAM EU over the last years as a key sponsor. All their important work and lobbying, most of it hidden, that is being done for the organic movement will become more and more important. It is therefore time that organic companies start to provide substantial support for this; it is time for them to be part of it as well, and to join and support IFOAM EU.

Ronald van Marlen, Ariza

If you’re not already involved, the movement needs you too!
**IFOAM EU meets the DG AGRI Commissioner Cioloş**

On 5 November, Commissioner for Agriculture and rural development received IFOAM EU President Christopher Stopes, Vice President Dorota Metera and Director Marco Schlüter. The constructive discussions focused on how to move forward on two key topics for the organic sector. First, on the upcoming organic regulation review, it was agreed that the review should focus on how to improve bottlenecks and shortcomings in the existing regulation, especially regarding import and control. Further, they exchanged views on how to proceed with current (US) and future (e.g. China) equivalence agreements. The IFOAM EU delegation emphasised the need for updating the EU organic plan from 2004, as the EU enters in 2014 into a new financial and political framework (2014 to 2020). The benefits of organic farming needs to be set into the context of the new framework and a consistent organic policy approach should be outlined, including policy areas such as rural development, promotion programmes, research, public procurement and agriculture.
Next EU budget must deliver greener and fairer farming

Ahead of the EU summit set to take place on 22-23 November, the IFOAM EU Group, the ARC 2020 platform and environmental groups have called on Head of States not to distribute blank cheques for agricultural spending ahead of the final decision on the overall EU budget or Multi-annual Financial Framework for 2014-2020. In an opinion piece published in English, French and German on EurActiv, together with other environmental NGOs, IFOAM EU outlined the need to ensure that the new CAP is greener and fairer for all farmers. A strong rural development budget that can support rural economies and further increase the environmental delivery is required. These demands have been echoed in an advertisement published by the IFOAM EU Group and environmental groups in the European Voice and the Economist.
### NEWS FROM IFOAM EU WORKING FIELDS

#### 1.1. EU Organic Regulation 834/2007

**IFOAM EU at Commission hearings on regulation review**

The Commission impact assessment in the context of the review process of the EU political and legal framework for organic production includes three hearings, in which the Commission receives presentations from organic stakeholders. IFOAM EU Group has representatives at each of the three hearings. The second hearing took place in October and focused on controls. Dorota Metera, Vice President, Keith Ball, Regulation Advisor, and Kjell Sjödahl Svensson, Swedish Board member, presented the IFOAM EU Group positions. At the next and final hearing on 20-21 November, Marco Schlüter, Director of IFOAM EU Group, Markus Arbenz, Director of IFOAM, and Arjon Kalter, Head of Quality Assurance & Project Management at Tradin, will provide input to the Commission on “External trade in organic products and global issues.”

**New IFOAM EU Group position papers**

Two new IFOAM EU position papers, *Controls in organic production and processing* and *Actions recommended for improving the credibility of organic imports from third countries*, are being considered by the Commission as part of its Organic Regulation Review. The needs of the varied stakeholders all along the chain – from farmers to processors – were brought together in these positions, to provide the Commission with a unified organic-sector position. The key IFOAM EU demand is increased control efficiency inside Europe and for imported products and 3rd-country operators, by improving and making better use of the existing system.

**Update on the Standing Committee on Organic Farming**

On 2-3 October 2012, the 109th meeting of the Standing Committee on Organic Farming (SCOF) took place.

The proposal to modify Article 21 and Annexes I and II of Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 was put on hold until the DG SANCO review of horizontal legislation on pesticide, and in particular on basic substances, becomes available. A new working document on improving certain aspects of controls and supervision in organic farming was discussed. This document presents proposals for the amendment of Articles 2, 63, 92 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 and Article 13 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008. IFOAM EU has published an *open reaction letter*, demanding that the administrative burden for control be seriously examined.

On equivalence agreements with third countries, certain aspects of the EU-US agreement were discussed, in particular wine and dairy products. Furthermore, the SCOF proposed a one year extension for the derogation to export European-certified organic products to South Korea, in light of the upcoming new South Korean organic regulation. The expected document regarding a new equivalence agreement with Japan will be soon provided by the Commission.

The next SCOF meeting are taking place on 13-14 November 2012 in Brussels. The working document on controls presented at the October meeting is being discussed further, a new working document on imports is being presented and information given on the list of non-organic ingredients in annex IX of Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008. Additional topics are EU equivalence agreements with the US, Japan and China.
1.1. EU Organic Regulation 834/2007

IFOAM EU response to the European Organic Certifiers Council (EOCC) pesticide residue guidelines

Following the launch of the EOCC’s proposed pesticide residue guidelines in September 2012, IFOAM EU Group has participated in EOCC’s public consultation by sending an official IFOAM EU letter responding to their proposals.

EGTOP report on organic food substances, products and techniques and on organic poultry

The main topic of the Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Farming (EGTOP) report on organic food issued this month is the evaluation of whether certain substances, products and techniques are consistent with the principles of organic processing laid down in Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, specifically: carnauba wax (E903), beeswax (E901), thiamine hydrochloride, diammonium phosphate, sodium, wood fibres steviol glycosides (E960), ion exchange and adsorption resins.

The recent EGTOP report on poultry is generally in line with the IFOAM EU position on poultry in the details and technical advice provided to the Commission about rearing rules for organic poultry on topics such as number of levels in multilayer systems, the definition of “veranda”, the vegetation cover of open air areas and limitations on birds per house. The report states that operations such as beak trimming, toe clipping, spur removal, live plucking and other mutilations should be forbidden. The group also states that the use of formaldehyde for disinfection under Annex VII of the organic regulation should be reviewed, and that consideration should be given to alternative products.

Are European citizens aware of the organic logo?

The Special Eurobarometer 389 on “Europeans’ attitudes towards food security, food quality and the countryside” was published last July. Respondents were shown five logos giving information about the nature of food products: the Organic logo, the Fairtrade logo, the Traditional Speciality Guaranteed logo (TSG), the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and the Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) logos. While one-third of EU citizens (36%) recognize the Fairtrade logo, a quarter (24%) recognise the new organic logo. Danish citizens are the most aware (39%) about the organic logo, followed by French (38%) and Luxemburgish (37%) citizens. The TSG, PDO and PGI logos are recognized by only a 15%, 14% and 14% of citizens respectively.

The organic logo or the “Euro-leaf” indicates that a product has been produced in accordance with the organic regulation (EC 834/2007). That the Euro-leaf is relatively new – introduced in July 2010 – might explain this lack of recognition among the European population. Further EU promotion campaigns should support the recognition of the logo.

For further information: IFOAM EU Group’s dossier on the “10 Questions and Answers to the new organic production logo of the European Union”.

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1 The EGTOP is a group of experts appointed to give technical advice to the Commission on given topics related to organic food and farming.
1.2. Policy

COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY (CAP)

CAP budget proposals published by the Cypriot Presidency
The latest budget proposals issued by the Cypriot Presidency on 29 October call for cuts of 2.0% (€5.65bn) for direct payments and market measures and 1.3% (€1.15bn) for rural development, based on the Commission’s proposals. The Presidency also proposes to increase the percentage that Member States can shift from Pillar 1 to Pillar 2 to between 10% and 15%. However, Member States whose direct aid is less than 90% of the EU average would be allowed to shift between 5% and 10% of funds from the second to the first pillar. The proposal also maintains the possibility of reducing the 30% of funding allocated to the greening component in the final negotiations, as well as making greening measures more flexible.

Reactions to the proposals
With MEPs voting for a resolution that CAP funding be at least maintained at 2013 levels in plenary in October, Rapporteurs from the Parliament’s Budget Committee have come out strongly against the cuts. Early in October, Agriculture Commissioner Dacian Cioloş criticised the position of some mainstream farming organisations that there should be a ring-fencing of money for direct payments in the first pillar. He stressed that this would inevitably be at the expense of important rural development measures under the second pillar and maintained that there needed to be a complimentary balance between both pillars. Meanwhile a coalition of Member States including Italy, Spain, Germany and Bulgaria led by France have come out publically in favour of maintaining the CAP budget at 2013 levels. Foreign and European Affairs Ministers will respond to the proposals at the General Affairs Council on 20 November, with bilateral meetings currently taking place between the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, and Member States ahead of the summit of EU Heads of State on 22-23 November.

Some Member States call for “proportional greening”
Farm Ministers from Denmark, Spain, Italy, Luxembourg and Portugal, led by the Irish Agriculture Minister called for greater flexibility in the allocation of greening payments between farmers in Member States at the Agriculture Council on 22 October in Luxembourg. The call follows a paper presented by the delegations to the Council in September which proposes allowing Member States to put in place a more flexible transition period for the levelling of direct payments in each country and calculating greening payments should be done on an individual rather than a regional or national basis, proportional to what each beneficiary receives as their basic payment.

At the Council meeting, EU Agriculture Commissioner Dacian Cioloş remained defiant that greening component must represent 30% of direct payments in each member state. In October, the Commissioner also came out strongly against ongoing proposals by mainstream farming organisations represented by COPA-COGECA who are calling for a greening “menu approach” whereby farmers would choose two measures from a menu of six measures, rather than the common package of three compulsory measures outlined in the Commission’s proposals.

Meanwhile the Cypriot Presidency has confirmed that a partial political agreement on CAP reform within the Council will be finalised by the end of 2013 ahead of negotiations with the Parliament. The next Agriculture Council will take place on 28-29 November.
Many IFOAM EU members are in contact with Ministries in their Member States and the IFOAM EU office in Brussels is continuing to meet with Member State Permanent Representations to the EU, in a joint effort to achieve comprehensive greening of the CAP including the prioritisation of organic farming systems as a pioneering and best practice model for driving sustainability across the agricultural sector.

**COMAGRI vote on CAP reports now set for January 2013**

The European Parliament’s Agriculture and Rural Development Committee has postponed the vote on its CAP reports as compromise negotiations continue between the different political groups on the CAP legislative package. The vote which was planned for the end of November is now expected to take place on 23-24 January 2013, with compromise amendments presented in the Committee by 15 December. The reports will then be put in front of all MEPs at plenary in March 2013 before negotiations open up between the Parliament, Council and Commission.

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

The Good Food March saw over 1,000 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 March initiators, including the IFOAM EU Group, encouraging all farmers and citizens across the EU to send photos and statements telling 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[at]goodfood-march.eu or for further information log on to the Good Food March Photo Action.

**IFOAM EU calls on Irish EU Presidency to prioritise organic farming in the CAP**

The IFOAM EU Group has called on the future Irish EU Presidency to help advance a clearer and more coherent policy framework for the organic sector, as it would help drive sustainability across the agri-food industry through the increased adoption of agro-ecological farming practices. Speaking at the recent Teagasc National Organic Conference in Ireland, IFOAM EU President Christopher Stopes highlighted the importance of ensuring that Member States are able to combine organic farming with relevant measures such as quality schemes, innovation, advisory services, investments, cooperation and agri-environment-climate measures together in their rural development programmes to help foster market-led economic growth of organic food and farming. Ireland will take up the 6-month rotating Presidency of the EU at the beginning of 2013.
**Agriculture MEPs recognise role of organic farming in future EU promotion policy**

MEPs in the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee tabled a report on 25 September which calls for more active stimulation of organic production and promotion due to the increasing demand for organic products. The report in response to the Commission communication on the future of EU information provision and promotion activity will be presented for a vote in plenary in November. Elsewhere the IFOAM EU office participated in a conference entitled “Towards a more ambitious EU Promotion Policy for Agriculture Product” which took place in the European Parliament on 17 September. The IFOAM EU Group has outlined that the organic sector can play an instrumental role in promoting sustainable production and food consumption and therefore the potential of organic production must be clearly recognised under future EU’s future information provision and promotion of agricultural products. The Commission is scheduled to publish legislative proposals in mid 2013.

**Mixed reactions to revised transparency rules for CAP payments**

There have been mixed reactions to the Commission’s revised proposals on the transparency of CAP payments, published in September. Some Farm Ministers and MEPs have come out strongly against the proposals on privacy grounds calling for information to be published on an aggregated basis or anonymously. Others have criticised the exemption of farmers receiving payments of between 500 and 1,000 euro calling for information on all farmers who receive public money to be published in order to ensure greater transparency.

**Seralini-study on risk assessment of GMOs**

A peer reviewed study published in the journal “Food and Chemical Toxicology”, conducted by French researcher Seralini and his team, showed significant increases in rates of cancer and deaths in rats fed with GM maize (NK603 from Monsanto) and those fed with water contaminated below the legal threshold with the pesticide Roundup, which NK603 is designed to be resistant to. The study has since provoked numerous reactions, including a coordinated critique in the media by scientists with close contacts to the biotech industry. The website GM watch has taken up these assessments and provides responses. The new EFSA guidelines for GMO risk assessment as proposed by the European Commission foresee obligatory 90-day feed trials only, long-term tests aren’t compulsory at all and this is the first long-term trial. IFOAM EU Group continues to call for improved risk assessment procedures and transparency, including the assessment of socio-economic risks.

For further information on CAP visit thinkingcap.ifoam-eu.org
**ENVIRONMENT & AGRICULTURE**

**“Product from my farm” label for the EU?**
On 16 October, at a meeting of the Advisory Group on the Quality of Agricultural Production, the European Commission announced that the new ‘Regulation on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs’ which covers protected designations of origin, protected geographical indications and traditional specialities has been agreed by the Council and Parliament and will be published by the end of 2012.

This legislative text foresees a Commission report to be presented within 12 months on the case for a new local farming and direct sales labelling scheme, in order to assist producers in marketing their produce locally. But no new logo for “products from my farm” has been established yet. The report of the Commission will partly be based on the outcome of the Working Group (WG) “Product from my farm”, which was constituted to determine what kind of instruments would help farmers with the direct and local marketing of their products. Even though there was no common agreement on the definition of “product of my farm” in the working group, some options were further discussed: the need for legislative and non-legislative instruments and the advantages and disadvantages of a potential, new “product of my farm” logo were discussed.

**Greenhouse gas emissions from Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) - legislative update**
Commenting on proposed greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting rules and action plans to mitigate Climate Change related to Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF), IFOAM EU Group sent voting recommendations to the European Parliament Committee for the Environment (COMENVI) on 9 October. We urged the Committee to support a clear and ambitious step towards GHG accounting, including from cropland. The draft report prepared by rapporteur Kriton Arsenis was adopted with some amendments on 10 October in the Committee, the resulting report will soon be online and voting in the plenary is planned for mid-January 2013.

In its vote, COMENVI supported the points IFOAM EU was calling for: LULUCF National Action Plans to be prepared by Member States and to make GHG accounting also compulsory for agricultural activities such as cropland and grassland management as well as wetland drainage and wetland rewetting.

Meanwhile, the Commission legislative proposal is also being discussed in Council working groups following the public Council discussion on the 11 June 2012 under the Danish Presidency. Many Member States have been critical about making any commitments that go beyond the Durban agreement in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), such as immediate introduction of GHG accounting for cropland.
1.2. Policy

**Origin labelling: Commission initiatives**
The biggest question at the Commission “Study on mandatory origin labelling for pig, poultry and sheep and goat meat” stakeholder workshop held on 26 October was whether origin labelling should refer to the name of the country or only be covered by the EU/Non-EU distinction. There was general consensus that all phases of animal production should be covered including birth, life and slaughtering. The stakeholders present also tended to agree on discussing the possibility of excluding the need to label the place of birth for 1-day old chicks and young piglets.

**Green public procurement**
The EU stakeholders debate on Green Public Procurement of food has been started, within the wider Commission exercise on the sustainable food. In this context, IFOAM EU is working for organic food to take its rightful place in the public procurement of food.

For best practices you can apply, read IFOAM’s and the Commission’s suggestions of leading examples of organic provision and procurement in European public canteens. The upcoming “Organic Food – A new Nordic agenda for quality organic food in public kitchens” conference is also a great opportunity to discuss the procurement of organic food and position organic within green public procurement. It will be held on 27-28 November at the Copenhagen House of Food.
**Consultation Public-Private Partnership Bio-based Industries**

European citizens and organizations have until 14 December to respond to the EU questionnaire on the Commission’s plan to establish a public-private partnership (PPP) for bio-based industries under Horizon 2020. The aim of the PPP will be to promote the development of integrated and diversified bio-refineries, including their biomass supply chains and expanding the range and volume of products manufactured by bio-based industries (e.g., bio-based plastics, chemical building blocks, advanced bio-fuels and high-value ingredients for pharmaceuticals and cosmetics) from renewable biological resources.

IFOAM EU and TP Organics are currently preparing a position paper on the PPP to be released mid-November. We will distribute it to all our members and stakeholders, urging them to submit their own contribution to the Commission’s questionnaire. The position paper will mainly address two key issues: the compatibility of further development of the bio-based industries with food security and sustainability objectives, and the need to capture the innovative potential of all actors in the agriculture and food sector.

**European Innovation Partnership “Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability”**

In February last year, the Commission adopted a Communication on the European Innovation Partnership “Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability.” A high-level Steering Board has now been established, consisting of 40 people from across the agricultural innovation landscape such as Member State representatives, farmers’ and forestry organisations, scientists, environmental and consumer organisations. The Steering Board will adopt a strategic implementation action plan which will provide strategic advice on priority areas and guidance on how to achieve the EIP objectives.

IFOAM EU is proud that our president Christopher Stopes has been invited to sit on the Steering Board. DG Agriculture and Rural Development will provide the secretariat for the Steering Board. In order to support the work of the secretariat, the Steering Board members have nominated Sherpas who will interact on their behalf directly with the secretariat. For IFOAM EU, this will be the director, Marco Schlüter.

In order to help prepare the organic and wide agro-ecological community for the EIP, IFOAM EU, TP Organics and ARC 2020 organised a workshop on 25 October in Berlin. As part of the agro-ecological innovation project, this workshop aimed at increasing understanding of the EIP and defining priorities for the EIP. The priorities selected are:

- Solving the major agronomic problems of the organic sector
- Developing resilient and diverse farming systems
- Obtaining social and institutional innovation for more sustainable food and farming systems in Europe
- Producing, processing and marketing locally adapted varieties and breeds.
**ITRE Committee: Final vote on Horizon 2020**
The New Framework Programme Horizon 2020 has reached a decisive moment. On 28-29 November, the Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) Committee will have its final vote before the plenary session, which will provide the mandate for entering negotiations with the Council.

TP Organics will continue lobbying in order to get organic and low input agriculture well recognized in the new framework programme. The next action will be sending a letter to MEPs and national stakeholders to underline the:

- Importance of resource use conservation/sufficiency in addition to resource efficiency
- Necessity to preserve the diversity of food production from farm to plate
- Value of an inclusive concept of innovation and knowledge partnerships.

Our proposed amendments advocate for these recommendations. Moreover, TP Organics is also working together with other NGOs to obtain a more important role for civil society in the political decision making process!

**Wrapping up the Agro-Ecological Innovation Project**
On 15 November, the final event of the project ‘Agro-Ecological Innovation’ will take place. This project has been carried out in collaboration with TP Organics and ARC 2020. The aim of the project and event are to demonstrate that, if they are integrated as mainstream farming practices, agro-ecological innovations hold huge potential to help us overcome food security and environmental challenges. The event will also serve to present our new publication: *Agro-ecology: 10 examples of successful innovation in agriculture.*

Representatives from the European Parliament and Commission will present the latest updates on Horizon 2020 and the European Innovation Partnership ‘Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability’ at the meeting. This will be followed by a panel discussion on our recommendations for the integration of agro-ecology in the new research and innovation policy framework:

- Farmers deserve fair compensation for their contributions to research and research policy: their participation serves the long-term benefit of wider society.

Due to the unexpected success of the event, the maximum number of participants has been reached and registration was closed. Slideshows and a report of the final debate will be made available after the event at: [http://agro-ecoinnovation.eu/](http://agro-ecoinnovation.eu/).
1.4. Project updates

**OrganicDataNetwork**

Twenty-eight participants attended the second meeting of the OrganicDataNetwork project on 4-5 October at the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) in Frick (near Basle, Switzerland).

“Data on areas, livestock numbers and operators are usually published in all countries, but there are not so many market data,” says Susanne Padel from the Organic Research Center in the UK. An online survey on data availability in Europe, with around 100 organisations replying, has now been evaluated. “The most important players in this field have answered the questionnaire,” adds Helga Willer (FiBL). “In major countries like Germany we had four or five responses, but in small countries like Slovenia we still lack information,” states the project coordinator of the Organic Data Network: Raffaele Zanoli, from the Polytechnic University of the Marche in Ancona, Italy. Ulrich Hamm from the University of Kassel adds: “Some sell the data, so it isn’t available if you do not pay for it.”

In the framework of the project, the currently available market data for domestic organic sales, import and export figures, and also figures concerning consumption in canteens and catering will be compiled. Price data will not be collected, but if they are available, there a link to the source will be provided.

For more information, please visit [www.organicdatanetwork.net](http://www.organicdatanetwork.net).

**Progress on developing of biogas production approaches for organic farming**

The SUSTAINGAS - “Enhancing sustainable biogas production in organic farming” Project invited the project partners, including IFOAM EU, to its second meeting in Berlin on 15-17 October. Experts debated the sustainability analysis of biogas plants in organic farming, with the tendency to focus on the calculation of GHG emission. They also discussed the evaluation sustainability aspects such as soil fertility, biodiversity, water quality, food vs. feed, source of substrates and biodigestates as high-value fertilizers.

It was recognized that the following issues are critical to economic performance of biogas plants:

1. Economical viability of using clover grass to produces biogas and the benefits of using organic fertilizer on the farm
2. Availability of organic biomass: residues, clover grass and intercrops, and
3. Common commitment of many producers to organise biomass supply, use of fertilizers and general market organization for energy produced and other by-products

More information on the project is available at [www.sustaingas.eu](http://www.sustaingas.eu)
EduOFP Concept & Forum on Quality Integrity

All those interested in joining the discussion on educational needs of organic processing sector are invited to join the LinkedIn discussion on this topic. This is one of the outcomes of the Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) Project “EduOFP Concept & Forum on Quality Integrity” meeting held on 2-3 October in the Netherlands. An open seminar on quality integrity was jointly organised by the Dutch organic umbrella organisation VBP and the Anti Fraud Initiative. During the seminar, a representative of the European Court of Auditors presented the results of their audit on the control system of organic products. The laboratory point of view was presented by Lach & Bruns Partners. Certification topics were covered by Jan Wicher Krol from SKAL and Jochen Neuendorff from GfRS, while Ronald van Marlen from Ariza represented the operators sector. Read the presentations and more information about the project.

Development of an education system for organic retail in Europe

Final results of the recent 2-year LdV project “Integration of the Quality Assurance System Eco-Qualify into EQF and ECVET” are now available on the European Shared Treasure site. The HANDBOOK Integration of the Quality Assurance System Eco-Qualify into EQF and ECVET presents the three key results of the project. The first is a comparison table between Eco-Qualify and European Qualification Framework (EQF) and presents a way to transfer Eco-Qualify qualifications into the EQF system. The second result is a survey of the development of the National Qualification Framework (NQF) systems in the partner countries and provides first approaches for integrating Eco-Qualify qualifications into the NQFs. The third outlines the methodology for integrating Eco-Qualify qualifications into the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

IFOAM EU Group, as one of the project partners, invites whole organic retail and educational sectors to use the results, to practically implement the proposed concepts and to help to further develop education.

More information about project is available on the project site.
2. 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 will fit your needs!

The 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:

Laura.Ullmann@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.

IFOAM EU Sponsorship in Action!

Sponsorship awards at the 6th European Organic Congress

© John Portelli

5th European Organic Congress

© Andrzej Szeremeta

Processing Conference, 2011
3. EVENTS

3.1. Review of events

IFOAM EU meets business

On 15 October, representatives from 13 organic companies from Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands came to Brussels to find out more on how IFOAM EU is promoting and protecting the organic movement at European level. The day was organised by IFOAM EU Group, in cooperation with Aoel, BioForum and VBP.

After a visit to the European Parliament, participants discussed the achievements of IFOAM EU Group over the last year, the current and future work plans of IFOAM EU Group, as well as how they can contribute to work on European regulation. Participants also had the opportunity to discuss the review of the organic regulation in context of their business with Mr. Onofre, Head of the DG Agriculture Organic Unit, and Ms. Linda Mauperon, Coordinator – Internal Policy and Regulation in the same unit. Dinner at a local organic restaurant closed the day.

New forms of land ownership in organic farming

Taking up the problem of land grabbing and related threats to future food security and the environment in many parts of the world, the “Land sharing vs. Land grabbing” conference presented alternative forms of land ownership for the future and existing organic farming models, on 16 October in Brussels. The conference report can be found online.

Natura food fair and conference on the quality and promotion of organic products

Experts discussed the challenges that the IFOAM EU position on environmental performance could lead to for the organic sector in Central and Eastern Europe at the IFOAM EU Group Conference on Quality and promotion of organic products. Participants also debated the issues of monitoring and handling of pesticide residues in conventional and organic products. Artur Tymiński from Polska Ekologia gave a presentation on the development of the market and promotion of organic products.

Approaches for the IFOAM EU Group to cooperation and capacity building in Central and Eastern Europe were also developed.

The conference was held on 13 October as one of many seminars and workshops at the Natura Food Fair in Łódź, the fair with largest organic participation in Poland. The fair gathered 206 exhibitors and over 10,000 visitors. Next year’s fair is planned for 11-13 October, 2013.
Organic stakeholders in Spain get a visit from Brussels

Marco Schlüter and Angela Morell Perez visited some key Spanish organic stakeholders during the first week of October, specifically around Seville, Cordoba, Malaga and Murcia. The first visit was to CAAE, a Spanish non-profit organisation that promotes and defends organic production. It organises campaigns and projects and offers services to face the challenges within the agri-food sector, environmental protection and the current economic situation. Jose Luis Garcia Melgarejo, Director General of CAAE and IFOAM EU Treasurer welcomed them. IFOAM EU also visited the Joint Research Center in Seville to discuss current research projects, mainly related to GMOs and coexistence.

Francisco Robles, owner of the Bodegas Robles located in Montilla then hosted IFOAM EU delegation on behalf of the Spanish Federation of Organic Processors (FEPECO). This winery has been producing organic wine since 1999 and has the honour of producing the first certified organic wine that have also received with the Protected Designation of Origin in the south of Spain.

The third visit was to Campiña Verde, a leading trade company that exports organic fruit and vegetables from the south of Spain to Germany and England through regional distributors and large chains. The German supermarket chain Rewe acquired part of Campiña Verde in 2009.

A special trip was then made to visit COATO, an agriculture cooperative located in Totana, Murcia. The cooperative exploits more 22,000 hectares of which 16,000 hectares are used for organic and integrated agriculture. The main organic crop is 11,000 ha worth of organic almonds. These can be produced thanks to the support from agro-environment payments under rural development programmes, otherwise this crop would not be economically viable any more.

The last visit was at Frunet, a company specialised in the marketing and trade of organic fruit and vegetables. Frunet exports mainly tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchinis, mangos and avocados to the UK, France and Scandinavia. Their story is truly touching. They were unjustly
3.1 Review of events

accused of being the supplier of cucumbers contaminated with the EHEC bacteria that affected northern Germany. After demonstrating that their products did not cause the contamination, it was still very difficult to recover all their clients as FRUNET’s image and long-term relationships had already been damaged by the false allegations. However, contrary to all predictions, FRUNET overcame all these difficulties and have recovered around 75% of their client base and are still one of the largest exporters of fresh organic products in the south of Spain.

10 years of EFSA - NGOs call for independent risk assessment

In parallel to the official 10-year celebrations of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), a group of NGOs invited interested parties to a citizens’ conference: A 10-year EFSA controversy, on 12 November in Parma, Italy. The aim was to discuss EFSA’s role to protect public health and the environment, in contrast to the often criticised influence of industry on the Authority’s independence. Discussions centred on risk management for GMOs and other various substances that end up in our food, such as pesticides and additives.
3.2. Preview of events

Processing Conference
The 2nd IFOAM EU Group Conference on organic food processing and environmental performance entitled The Future of Organic Food Processing: Sustainability – Quality – Integrity, will gather organic processing sector representatives and experts on 26-27 November 2012 in Frankfurt, Germany.

Key topics of discussion at this year’s conference include:
- Environmental performance and sustainability
- Careful processing and evaluation of techniques, additives and quality
- Challenges for control & certification, import & export, sourcing & traceability and pesticide residues

Plenary sessions will be held in English and German. English is the main language of conference workshops.

This conference is a great opportunity for the organic processing sector to exchange views with Mr João Onofre, Head of the DG Agri Organic Farming Unit, who has confirmed his participation at the event.

Late registration is still possible.

For more information please visit: http://organicfoodprocessing.eu

New Skills for a European Bioeconomy
On 20-21 November 2012, the European Commission will host a conference on ‘New skills for a European Bioeconomy’ in Brussels. Bioeconomy stakeholders and all those active in education and training are invited to discuss the role of skill development in driving and facilitating the transition towards a bioeconomy and seizing the employment opportunities of this transition. The conference aims to outline the new skills needed, the pathways for their acquisition, as well as how new skills, know-how, competences and capacities developed in academia could be optimally put to work to drive change and develop new models for the bioeconomy sectors. Consult the full programme.
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>15 November</td>
<td>Dissemination event as part of the Agro-ecological innovation project</td>
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<tr>
<td>26-27 November</td>
<td>Processing Conference</td>
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<td>27-28 November</td>
<td>Nordic Conference - A new Nordic agenda for quality organic food in public kitchens</td>
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<td>13-16 February</td>
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Business representatives speak with Mr. Onofre, Head of Unit, and Ms. Linda Mauperon, Coordinator of Internal Policy and Regulation, both from DG Agriculture’s Organic Unit.