NEW WEBSITE COMING SOON!

The IFOAM and IFOAM EU websites are receiving a new look and the new sites will be launched in the coming days. The new IFOAM EU site will be organised by topic areas corresponding to our main areas of work. We hope you will enjoy the new look and feel.

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Dear readers,

With the new growth of spring, this month brought significant news from the European Commission: there will be a new Organic Regulation; DG Sanco is proposing to take over management of the organic control process; and a legislative proposal on seed and propagating material has been published.

It seems that the European Commission will issue a new legislative proposal, in the spirit of making legislation smarter and better and aligning it to the Lisbon treaty. The question remains how much the substance of the proposal will differ from that of the current legislation. IFOAM EU just handed in major input, a dossier including general considerations and detailed recommendations for the ongoing review. Stakeholder consultations will end at the beginning of the summer period. Over the summer, the Commission will finalise its impact assessment. In the autumn it will prepare the draft and translate the legal proposal – no consultations will be done at this time. Finally, it will be presented early next year.

In the meantime, DG Sanco has published a legal proposal to take over the organic control process. This is part of a larger initiative on the part of DG Sanco to bring all food oversight processes under its authority. The legislative proposal is now in the co-decision process and the European Parliament and Council will decide whether to shift this responsibility from DG Agri to DG Sanco. IFOAM EU is currently assessing the specific impacts and gathering input; the greatest impact would clearly be on certification and control bodies.

The European Commission proposal for a new legislation on plant reproductive material” (COM (2013) 262) is an interim result of the review of the complex seed legislation, which started in 2009. IFOAM EU and other stakeholders intensely lobbied the Commission to propose legislation that takes the diversity of the seed sector into account. Under the legislation currently in force, highly uniform varieties are treated as the norm and all others are ruled under derogations or not accepted at all.

In contrast, the Commission proposal would allow for the registration of heterogeneous material. But despite this small success, the proposal does not yet sufficiently provide a legal framework for registering open pollinated varieties, nor does it provide farmers and gardeners with the possibility of selling small amounts of seed without registration. For the organic movement and other friends of seed diversity, this means that there is still a lot of work to do. The legislative procedure in the European Parliament and Council of Ministers will quickly gain pace, as it seems the procedure is likely to end before the EU Parliament election campaigns which will start in early 2014.

The future of seed cannot be left to a handful of multinational companies and the organic movement must take action to obtain regulations that match our needs. If you’re not already a member or supporter of IFOAM EU, now’s the time to get involved.

Because together we are stronger and have more influence on the development of our common interest – Making Europe More Organic.

Sincerely yours,
Marco Schlüter
IFOAM EU Director
POLITICAL HOTSPOT

COUNCIL ISSUES REPORT ON ORGANIC REGULATION


IFOAM EU Group welcomes the Council report and supports many of its conclusions. This report is of fundamental importance for the ongoing review process of the organic regulation.

The Council report specifically calls for:
• Further simplification of the existing framework and harmonise interpretation of regulations
• Clarification for products currently out-of-scope, such as textiles, and mass catering operations
• Reduction of the number of exceptions to a minimum, while maintaining some flexibility for specific circumstances and in accordance with the varied levels of development of the organic sector in the Member States
• The Commission to review the current technical advice process involving the Expert Group on Technical Advice on Organic Production (EGTOP)

The Council report also provides positions on key topics of regulation.

The control system, according to the Council, should be “rigorous, proportionate and cost efficient” and the responsibilities of the different control actors must be clarified and the lines of communication improved.

As for the international trade of organic products, the Council states that “reciprocity and transparency” should be required in any agreement with third countries and, at the same time, support for EU market access must be to products coming from developing countries. Furthermore, the Council invites the Commission to assess the possibility to use electronic import certificates.

The importance of having statistical data on trade and the promotion of organic farming is also underlined.

NEW IFOAM EU DOSSIER ON THE ORGANIC REGULATION REVIEW

At the invitation of the Commission, IFOAM EU Group prepared a dossier summarising all its positions relevant to the current regulation review process. It includes recommendations on topics such as controls, pesticide residue management, environmental performance, harmonisation of labelling and international trade.

In this dossier, IFOAM EU also explains the necessity of a new EU Organic Action Plan and provides many recommendations for content.

NEXT ADVISORY GROUP ON ORGANIC FARMING

On 26 June 2013 organic stakeholders will have their last opportunity to give the Commission further input to the current process of review of the regulation (EC) No 834/2007, at the Advisory Group on Organic Farming (AGOF) in Brussels.
1 NEWS FROM IFOAM EU WORKING FIELDS

1.1 REGULATION

NEW EU REGULATION ON CONTROLS PUBLISHED

On 29 April 2013, a new regulation on the control system for organic farming and production (EU) No 392/2013 was published. It amends Implementing Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 and articles 2, 63, 68 and 92 in particular.

In general, the changes to article 92 are meant to improve transparency and communication between all the control stakeholders (Commission, Competent Authorities and Control Bodies). Additional commitments of communication from the operator to the control body are added in the amendment of article 68. This amendment also interestingly allows for the possibility of using electronic certification if a tamper-proof electronic method is employed.

Important new requirements to control bodies’ activities are:

- The number of samples to be taken and analysed by the control body every year shall correspond to at least 5% of the number of operators under its control
- Additional random control visits have account for at least 10% of their controlled operators, with these visits being target at higher risk operators
- At least 10% of all inspections and visits carried out have to be unannounced

In issuing this new regulation, the Commission wants also responding to the 2011 fraud case and to the report of the European Court of Auditors highlighting weaknesses in the organic control system.

The new regulation will enter into force on 1 January 2014.

IFOAM EU LETTER ON ANNEX IX CONCERNING NON-ORGANIC INGREDIENTS

On 15 May, IFOAM EU Group sent the Commission an official letter on Annex IX of Regulation (EC) 889/2008 governing non-organic agricultural ingredients that can be used in organic processing. After consulting organic processors throughout Europe, IFOAM EU is of the opinion is that this list can be now halved.

The exemptions were originally made to enable the use of particular ingredients not available in organic quality at the time. Since then the market has developed significantly and many are now available in organic quality and in sufficient quantities.

IFOAM EU AND EOCC COLLABORATE ON “PESTICIDE RESIDUE MANAGEMENT”

Representatives of IFOAM EU and the European Organic Certifiers Council (EOCC) met in Brussels on 12 April 2013 to develop a joint approach to the management of pesticide residue in organic farming and production.

In the recent past IFOAM EU and EOCC have published their own guidelines on this topic but during the meeting it was acknowledged that the whole organic sector would benefit if a common approach were produced as well.

The next steps of the collaboration will be:

- Harmonising the vocabulary by using the same definitions
- Sharing comments on each other’s guidelines
- Drafting a text about the “Guideline interfaces”: topics that concern both operators and control bodies. This text should result in a common basic understanding for all stakeholders of the key issues in this matter.

IFOAM EU Guideline for Pesticide Residue Contamination for International Trade in Organic

EOCC Pesticide Residues Guideline: A guidance document for the certification decision making process
1.2 POLICY

SEED AND GMOs

FARM DIVERSITY AND BIODIVERSITY MUST BE THE PRECEPT FOR THE NEW SEED LEGISLATION

The European Commission has presented a legislative proposal (COM (2013) 262) on seed and plant propagating material.

IFOAM EU Group will advocate for improvements and clarifications regarding the condition for registering varieties from organic plant breeding. The legislative text must set a clear frame for open pollinated varieties to be tested according to adapted criteria. Registration on the basis of an officially recognised description must be also possible for new varieties. Conditions for the registration of heterogeneous seed and plant propagating material must be clearer in the legislative text to prevent implementing rules from creating new burdens instead of reducing them.

As well, exchange and sales of small amounts of seed between farmers and gardeners should be outside the scope of the regulation, and thus not require that these operators register.

This process is crucial for the future of seed diversity. Let’s make it better.

Contact antje.koelling [at] ifoam-eu.org to get involved.

EU-US TRADE DEAL MUST NOT COMPROMISE FOOD SAFETY OR IMPOSE GMOS

The European Union is about to enter into talks with the United States of America on a new trade agreement. A deal that would raise a raft of serious environmental and social concerns and could weaken safeguards and consumer choice. All in order to please multi-national corporations, including opening the door to more genetically modified food and plants in Europe.

Citizens were invited to speak out and tell their MEPs that any trade deal should not force feed us GM food before the vote, by the NGO initiated Stop the Crop action.

On 23 May, by a majority of European Members of Parliament approved a resolution that “emphasises the sensitivity of certain fields of negotiation, such as the agricultural sector, where perceptions of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), cloning and consumer health tend to diverge between the US and the EU.” The mandate for the negotiations will be endorsed by the European Council on 18 June.

EUROPEAN INDUSTRIES SIGN DECLARATION FOR BRAZILIAN GMO-FREE SOY

Representatives of industries that use soy in their food and livestock production as well as food retailers gave support to GMO-free soy production in Brazil in order to provide European consumers with GMO-free food products.

The signatories to the Declaration (include Colruyt Group, DVT, EDEKA, Kaisser’s Tengelmann, Kaufland, Lidl, Netto, Rewe, Soja, Sonae, tegut and Spar) target all parties in Brazil involved with the GMO-free soy production including seed production, farming, storage and processing, and the transportation and export of soybeans and soy meal.

STOP THE CROP
for a sustainable, GMO-free future
EU INSTITUTIONS REMAIN FAR APART ON KEY ISSUES IN CAP TRILOGY NEGOTIATIONS

Since April 2013, the European Commission, Parliament and Council have been in so-called trilogy negotiations on the reform of the CAP post-2013. All three EU Institutions remain far apart on a number of issues, including:
   • Greening of direct payments (Pillar 1)
   • Support for advanced sustainability measures under rural development (Pillar 2)
   • The transfer of funds between Pillar 1 and 2.

With progress on substantive issues remaining slow and no deal in sight, talks are expected to go down to the wire. EU leaders contend that a final deal must be reached at the next Agriculture Council to be held on 24–25 June.

Despite speculation that there could be delays in a final decision on the CAP post-2013, EU leaders remain confident that an agreement on CAP reform can be reached by the end of the Irish Presidency in June. Nevertheless any formal adoption of the final legal CAP text by the Agriculture Council and the European Parliament can only occur once the EU Budget 2014–2020 (MFF) has been agreed.

Challenges remain for shifting funding from direct payments to rural development

With the European Council proposing to cut the Pillar 2 fund from 95.74 billion to the 85.09 billion euro (11.12%) based on 2007–2013 budget figures, the debate on flexibility to shift money between Pillar 1 and 2 has re-emerged as a hotly contested issue among the Institutions and stakeholders. All EU institutions continue to differ on criteria for the transfer of money between the direct payments and rural development funds. A number of conventional farming associations from the UK, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Finland and Denmark have come out strongly against the transfer of Pillar 1 money to Pillar 2 without co-financing requirements, arguing that it would incentivise Member States to replace national contributions with EU funding.

Major threat of even deeper cuts to rural development funding from direct payments

In the budget deal reached by the European Council last February, a number of member states received “one-off lump sum payments” for rural development in addition to their overall Pillar 2 allocation. There is now much speculation that many Member States will seek to transfer up to 10% of Pillar 2 funds to Pillar 1 as proposed under the Agriculture Council’s position.

The European Council agreement would also like to see payments under Pillar 1 reduced from 322 billion to 277.85 billion euro (13.71%). Therefore there may be the temptation among some Member States to offset losses to direct payment allocations in Pillar 1 by transferring money from Pillar 2 to Pillar 1. This would result in even deeper cuts in funding for new rural development programmes.

More information on the positions of the EU Institutions can be found here.
SUPPORT FOR ORGANIC FARMING CAN DELIVER ON WATER OBJECTIVES, SAY EXPERTS

Experts have identified the development of organic farming as an opportunity for Member States to deliver on the Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives under the next CAP at a recent workshop on improving the delivery of WFD measures through rural development programmes (RDPs).

Experts highlighted high demand by retailers for organic food in terms of its environmental delivery in the area of water and the challenges of protecting drinking water sources by local municipalities as key reasons for Member States to invest in organic farming in improving WFD measures in new RDPs.

Other relevant measures include on-farm investments, basic services and village renewal, forestry measures and agri-environment. Over the last decade Member States have been required to draw up River Basin Management Plans for each River Basin District or area, in order to ensure that the water bodies reach good status by 2015. Most Member States have developed plans for the period 2010–2015.

You can highlight the potential of organic farming to meet WFD objectives

You use the current activities on the WFD to get involved and influence the implementation of new rural development programmes in the area of water. Further information can be found in a recent report on Practical Experiences and Knowledge Exchange in Support of the WFD Implementation (2010–2012). The report published by the European Commission Joint Research Centre, as part of the River Basins Network on WFD and Agriculture, includes a number of examples involving organic farming. You can learn more about possible combinations between organic farming and other rural development measures in our RDP Water factsheet.

Call for input on RDP measures and related Projects

Stakeholder consultations are a compulsory part of the design and implementation of new Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) on Member State level. Get involved! With stakeholders already being consulted on the implementation of the new rural development programme in many Member States and regions, the IFOAM EU office is calling on members and other interested stakeholders to share best practice examples of RDP measures as well as lessons learned from previous programming and other related projects that support organic farming development. Examples from your country or region will be disseminated as part of a toolkit on rural development implementation. Send your input to stephen.meredith [at] ifoam-eu.org

Take advantage our factsheets and other resources on organic farming and new RDPs

IFOAM EU has published factsheets that explain rural development and organic farming support measures that improve water quality, soil health, biodiversity and climate change mitigation and adaptation. Training and discussions on the national/regional implementation also took place in April at IFOAM EU’s Sustainable Rural Development Training Days in Dublin organised in partnership with Irish members the IOFGA and the Organic Trust. Links to presentations from the Public seminar are now available on the event webpage.

For more information about our toolkit and the Sustainable Rural Development Training Days proceedings please contact stephen.meredith [at] ifoam-eu.org
ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

EU PARLIAMENT FOOD POLICY GROUP: COMMISSION EYES POTENTIAL GROWTH FOR ORGANIC FARMING

There is real potential to increase the percentage of EU agriculture land under organic production by up to 15–20% under new EU policy instruments according to João Onofre, Head of DG AGRI’s Organic Unit.

Mr Onofre was speaking at a Debate on European Organic Food Production as part of the European Parliament’s Food Policy Interest Group, chaired by MEP Sirpa Pietikäinen on 14 May in the European Parliament.

Marco Schlüter, Director of the IFOAM EU Group was also a speaker at the event and highlighted the potential of the organic sector to deliver on environment challenges and contribute proactively to rural economies. As of 2011, in Europe it was already worth 21.5 billion euro.

TRAINING ON SUSTAINABLE BIOGAS

SUSTAINGAS is distributing the knowledge and expertise of organic biogas to an interested and involved target group.

Free training sessions will be offered to organic farmers and their representatives, biogas consultants and associations, green energy companies and interested consumers. The trainings will take place in six countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Poland and Spain in the national language from September 2013 to February 2014.

Please visit www.sustaingas.eu/trainings.html for more information.
1.3 EU RESEARCH & INNOVATION POLICY/TP ORGANICS

OFFER YOUR ASSESSMENT OF TODAY’S CHALLENGES WITH RESPECT TO WATER, FOOD AND ENERGY IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION

An open consultation has been launched by the Mediterranean Science, Policy, Research and Innovation Gateway (MedSpring) project. Civil society, the scientific community and policy-makers are invited to provide input that will be used in the development of a strategic research agenda for the Euro-Mediterranean region on the topic of water scarcity, high quality affordable food, and energy.

Results of consultation will be extensively discussed during the next Euro-Mediterranean Expert Group (EMEG) that will be held on 20–21 June. The consultation and meeting results will be part of a policy recommendations paper for the Euro-Mediterranean research agenda.

Additionally, consultation participants will be offered to join the EMEG Meeting discussion “digitally” and provide input virtually in real-time.

To participate, please, follow the instructions here. Then access the open consultation. It will take you no more than 15 minutes. The deadline to submit your answers is 3 June.

SECOND CORE ORGANIC II RESEARCH SEMINAR

On 15 May, the 2nd CORE Organic II research seminar took place in Amsterdam.

In the keynote speech, Krijn Poppe, co-chair of the collaborative working group on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems of the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research explained that during the last decades the linear model of innovation – from lab to field – has progressively been replaced by a participatory approach, in which innovation is ‘co-produced’ through interactions between all stakeholders. The collaborative working group making recommendations to the Commission on the implementation of the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) for Agriculture, is using this new understanding of innovation as a guiding principle.

Krijn also recommended the CORE Organic partners pay more attention to the innovation aspect of the projects they fund. For instance, they could require projects to link up with innovation networks or ask to include organic agribusinesses.

Thomas Alföldi, communication adviser at FiBL Switzerland, presented tips and tricks for a successful dissemination plan:

• Key messages have to be adapted to target groups and should be communicated through a well planned mix of tailored tools and channels, such as articles in magazines, e-newsletters, video clips, commented slideshows, social media, etc.

• Dissemination should plans be developed along with research plans and not afterwards as a stand-alone plan

• When developing dissemination material such as technical leaflets, researchers should seek collaboration with advisers and members of the actual target group.

Thomas also recommended that the funding bodies of CORE Organic request more elaborated dissemination plans from project partners.

The coordinators of the 14 CORE Organic II projects presented their project and shared ideas with the other participants and the funding bodies.
**EIP FOR AGRICULTURE SETS UP A SERVICE POINT**

The Commission’s Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development established a service point for the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) for Agriculture. This EIP Service Point will act as a mediator in enhancing communication and cooperation between all relevant innovation actors (farmers, advisers, agribusiness, civil society, researchers & administrations), with the aim of enhancing productivity and sustainable resource management across the whole value chain.

The service point will provide information on “innovation-related policy measures, relevant research activities & knowledge databases, including lessons learned from practice-oriented projects.” It also has specific tasks, the first of which is the organisation of focus groups of 20–25 experts to discuss specific challenges and produce a list of concrete ideas for future interactive projects.

The themes of the first three focus groups are: optimising arable yields in organic farming, reduction of antibiotic use in pig production, and protein crops. A call for experts for each of the focus groups is expected soon. **The call for experts is open until 11 June.**

The service point will be fully operational from 11 July onwards. The service point will be run by 7 partners from 6 countries, with the Flemish Land Agency from Belgium acting as the lead partner. The other partners are— the Dutch Government Service for Land & Water Management, the Estonian Agricultural Research Centre, Project Management Jülich from Germany, the French Association des Chambres d’Agriculture de l’Arc Atlantique, the University of Santiago de Compostela in Spain and Jusbox.eu, a Belgian communications & events agency.

**ARIZA’S EXPERIENCES WITH THE RISE TOOL**

The **Response-Inducing Sustainability Evaluation** (RISE), which provides farmers with scientifically sound yet practically relevant information that motivates and helps them improve the sustainability of their farms, and also helps companies improve their environmental performance.

Ariza produces and supplies organic fruit products. In cooperation with FiBL Switzerland, they tested the RISE tool to assess the sustainability of projects in China. Ariza Director Ronald van Marlen said: “Ariza contacted the Swiss College of Agriculture (Bern) in 2009 for advice on the RISE model because we felt the need to systematically measure the sustainability of our suppliers. In order to reduce the unpredictability of our supply chain, we need to know the concrete conditions in which our suppliers operate. We need growers we can trust.”

In 2011, Ariza tried the RISE methodology for the first time, in an organic pomegranate project in Singxua Province, China. Ronald van Marlen’s observations: “This pilot project taught us that even though it takes a lot of time to interview the farmer and to collect all data required by the RISE tool, the effort is worth it. The outcome could be understood by the grower, which is a pre-condition for all types of assessment, and provided a good basis for discussions on how to further improve the sustainability of the farm. In addition, we were particularly satisfied with the strong communication power of the RISE cobweb towards our customers.”

Ronald van Marlen concludes: “We will continue using the RISE tool and further adapt it to our needs. This will benefit our suppliers, but also help us to raise awareness among our customers about the importance of having a sustainable food chain.”
1.4 IFOAM EU COLLEAGUES

Saying Goodbye to Old Colleagues

Andrzej Szeremeta
Food Legislation Coordinator

This month IFOAM EU bids goodbye to Andrzej, who started with us as a European Service Volunteer in September 2007. He grew into his most recent role as Food Legislation Coordinator through great knowledge of the sector and dedication. Andrzej will now finish his PhD on organic data and pursue the organic interests close to his heart.

Teresa Elola
Policy Assistant

For the last year Teresa has been working hard on climate change, biodiversity, water and other environmental issues as they relate to (organic) agriculture. Coming from a policy and law background, she quickly grasped the organic spirit. As her contract comes to a close, we would like to thank her for her dedicated work and wish her well in her future endeavours coordinating a university programme and building up an organic garden.

Dimitrios Petalios
Regulation Trainee

Dimitrios’ year-long traineeship also draws to a close this month. His experience as an agronomist was valuable in his contributions to IFOAM EU’s work on the organic regulations and food policy. We would also like to thank him for his help preparing position papers, his contributions to European projects and his organisational assistance of conferences. We hope that with this experience, many doors will open for him in the near future.
AND WELCOMING NEW ONES

Asta Donielaite
European volunteer – Event planning

I spent my last few years living in Kaunas, Lithuania, and studying architecture. Even though I came from another field of study, agriculture has never been really unknown for me, because I grew up in a family of farmers and know how many problems and difficulties farmers encounter. Therefore, I would like to help IFOAM EU support its members. I look forward to gaining experience in organic farming and being a part of the developments IFOAM EU is leading in organic. Maybe someday I will even have a chance to put into practice the acquired knowledge about organic agriculture on my family’s farm.

Laura Maeso
European volunteer – Policy

After having finished my Environmental Science degree in Madrid, I realized that in order to make a truly change in the environment, it was necessary to make a change in the society. I obtained my master’s degree in Rural Development with that guiding thought in my mind. Working in a social garden and on food sovereignty for an NGO called VSF-Justicia Alimentaria Globalin, I developed the idea that organic agriculture could be the perfect next step. Now, as an EVS Volunteer at IFOAM EU, I have the opportunity to learn more about it and put my knowledge into practice in order to support the organic agriculture movement.

Marie-Chiara Tort
European volunteer – Research

I come from Paris, France. I’ve studied European and International law in France and Italy, and have a master’s degree in Sustainable Agricultural Development. My professional experience also includes international cooperation in Jerusalem and Panama. I also deeply believe in organic agriculture and sustainable farming as an answer to many environmental, social and economical issues we are facing. I’m therefore very happy to be part of IFOAM EU and TP Organics and to work for what I believe in.
This year we are celebrating 10 years of IFOAM EU’s presence in Brussels with major achievements for organic food and farming in Europe. IFOAM EU’s lobbying work improves and sustains the framework organic stakeholders need to operate successfully in Europe.

The political and legal framework for organic farming in the EU is set by the European Institutions, and the unifying power of IFOAM EU gives the European organic movement the possibility of bringing its needs to the political decision makers and enables the movement to achieve so much.

Help to make organic’s impact in Europe stronger – donate today

Everyone who donates this year will have their (organisation) name and amount published. Top donors first!

Contact us: laura.ullmann [at] ifoam-eu.org
Tel: +32 2 808 79 91

IFOAM EU KEY SPONSORS 2013
ARIZA, Ecover, Wessanen

ARIZA, Ecover and Wessanen show their support for the work of IFOAM EU by a financial cooperation with IFOAM EU throughout 2013. Their money will be used to co-finance IFOAM EU events, projects and publications and is a highly valued contribution to our work.

NEW: RECEIVE A 15% DISCOUNT WHEN ADVERTISING IN ORGANIC & WELLNESS NEWS

IFOAM EU is proud of a new partnership with O.W.N. to benefit our members and sponsors (of €3,000 or more). You can now receive a 15% discount when advertising in Organic & Wellness News (O.W.N.) when displaying the IFOAM EU 10-year logo in their ad.

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3 EVENTS

3.1 PREVIEW OF EVENTS

7TH EUROPEAN ORGANIC CONGRESS


Key speakers
Mr. Georg Häusler, Head of the Cabinet of European Commission for Agricultural and Rural Development will outline the Commission’s position on reviewing the Organic farming legislation and organic’s future role in the EU growth strategy Europe 2020 during the opening panel on July 3rd.

Mr. Vigilijus Jukna, Lithuanian minister of agriculture, will also join the panel and will discuss public expectations, the opportunities and obstacles for organic producers to deliver their final products to consumers.

We also count on the presence of Joao Onofre, Head of the Organic Farming Unit at DG Agriculture, who will present all the latest information about the Organic Regulation Review.

Jürgen Sanders from the German Thünen Institute will give us his expert point of view on the EU Organic Action Plan.

Your input counts too
Contribute to the process! Your input at this congress will be used to feed into the IFOAM EU proposals provided to the Commission.

Register now
Looking forward to seeing you in Vilnius.

4TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ORGANIC AGRICULTURE SCIENCES (ICOAS)

The 4th Scientific Conference on Organic Agriculture in Central and Eastern Europe will be held 9–13 October 2013 in Hungary. Previously held in the Czech Republic, ICOAS provides an opportunity for researchers, non-governmental organizations, practitioners and policy makers around the globe to meet and discuss current results of organic agriculture sciences.

The theme for ICOAS 2013 is Targeting Global Sustainability – Food Security, Biodiversity and Climate Change.

ICOAS 2013 is hosted by the Hungarian Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (ÖMKi), partner institute of FiBL Switzerland.

Check here for calls for symposia and papers. Registration for the conference is now open.
TP Organics Stakeholder Forum 2013 – Organic Solutions for Sustainable Agriculture

TP Organics invites you to its Stakeholder Forum, Organic solutions for sustainable agriculture, which will take place in the European Parliament in Brussels on 25 June 2013 from 3 – 6 p.m.

The event will gather experts from the organic and low-input food & farming sector, SMEs, public institutions, other technology platforms, and civil society organisations to set priorities for the first Horizon 2020 working programmes and the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability.

Please find the full programme here.

Please register before 12 June

Agroecology for Sustainable Food Systems in Europe: A Transformative Agenda

The conference on 26–27 June will identify the key elements – in policies, research, and social processes – required for agroecological models of production to reach a fundamental transformation of the agro-food system in Europe.

Changing models of agricultural production per se is not enough, especially given the emerging context of peak oil, climate change, food and water scarcities, and economic recession. The challenge for Europe is to radically transform the entire food system, its support infrastructure (energy, water, waste sinks, resource recycling) and socio-economic incentives.

Take part and discuss with us the policies and research needed for the transformation towards agroecological food systems in Europe!

Please find the full programme here. The event will be held at the European Parliament and Université Libre de Bruxelles.

Please register here

For more information and outline of the conference click here

Seed Gathering

20–22 September 2013: Let’s Liberate Diversity – Switzerland 2013 “From planting to plate”

The Let’s Liberate Diversity! forum is an annual gathering of farmers, seed-savers and groups from all across Europe who are working on bringing agricultural biodiversity to life on farms and in gardens.
3.2 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 6–7 June  Sustainable Foods Summit  
  Amsterdam, the Netherlands

- 17–19 June  8th Organic Marketing Forum  
  Warsaw, Poland

- 25 June  TP Organics Stakeholder Forum  
  Brussels, Belgium

- 26–27 June  Agroecology for Sustainable Food Systems in Europe: A Transformative Agenda  
  Brussels, Belgium

- 2–4 July  7th European Organic Congress  
  IFOAM EU in collaboration with the Lithuanian Presidency of the EU  
  Vilnius, Lithuania

- 9–13 October  4th International Conference on Organic Agriculture Sciences (ICOAS)  
  Hungary

- 11–13 October  Natura Food Fair  
  Lodz, Poland

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 [at] ifoam-eu.org. For further information contact your national board member or the office in Brussels.

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IFOAM EU’s Andrzej Szeremeta at the March against Monsanto in Brussels on 25 May © Irina Verissimo