

6th EUROPEAN ORGANIC CONGRESS

Copenhagen, Denmark
17-18 April 2012

Organisers:



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Organic farming must be at the heart of CAP reform

- Two day European Organic Congress began today in Denmark with about 200 participants
- High level speakers underline the role of organic farming in the CAP reform
- IFOAM EU Group launches [dossier](#) to evaluate organic regulations
- Denmark presents plan to reach 60% organic food in public canteens

Copenhagen, 17 April 2012 - The 6th European Organic Congress "Smart change - towards a sustainable CAP" started this morning with a high level policy panel discussing the CAP reform and the launch of a new [dossier](#) to evaluate the EU organic regulations.

The Deputy Director General of DG Agriculture and Rural Development, **Jerzy Bogdan Plewa**, described the Commission [proposals for the CAP 2014-2020](#), a "greener" and more sustainable agriculture policy. He stated that support for organic farming remains an essential ingredient in the policy recipe for sustainable food production. Regarding the proposed debate on the experiences related to implementation of the current organic legislation he welcomed that this will help to safeguard the integrity of the organic farming system and to improve control and enforcement.

Morten Lautrup-Larsen, Chairman of the Council Working Group on Rural Development, spoke on behalf of the Danish EU Presidency. The Danish EU Presidency has high ambitions to lay the foundations for a greener CAP, with more focus on our common resources, and a sound basis for the continued development of organic farming in the EU. Denmark is also a pioneer in supporting organic farming with its goal to double the area under organic farming by 2020. The Danish Minister, Mette Gjerskov, will soon present a national Organic Action Plan with several initiatives in order to achieve this goal. One of the main initiatives is that at least 60% of the raw materials for meals at publicly operated kitchens should be organic by the year 2020.

"Organic farming has always been a frontrunner in sustainable farm practices. This role has been recognised by EU policy makers since 1991 with the creation of the first EU regulation for organic food and farming. Now organic farming is an established part of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)", stressed **Christopher Stopes**, IFOAM EU Group President, on the occasion of the launch of the 3rd IFOAM EU Group regulation [dossier European Organic Regulations - An evaluation of the first three years - Looking for further development.](#) Organic farming is a progressive system that continues to develop. This dossier delivers expertise and ideas on how to reflect recent experiences in the further development of organic regulations, with the aim to reach full integrity and credibility of the organic food system. It provides a valuable input to the evaluation and review of organic regulations and the European Organic Action Plan, planned for 2012-2013."

"Danish organic farmers are ready to face future challenges and to respond to societal demands that reach further than those current reflected in the organic standards at the EU level. The [dossier](#) describes possibilities to achieve the continuous dynamic development of organic farming towards its aims and principles by giving the possibility to member states to apply rules that go even beyond the European compromise," adds **Evald Vestergaard**, President of Organic Denmark. "To progress towards a green future for our food systems, the overall CAP framework needs substantial change just as the CAP should provide possibilities to develop the market for green products. A foundation for real change is established when environmental sustainable farming becomes economical sustainable farming. Therefore CAP payments must be re-focused from the production of food to the production of public goods."

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More than 200 participants are present at the two-day-long European Organic Congress in Copenhagen, Denmark, where policy makers as well as experts from the organic sector, science and civil society have contributed their visions for the future of the CAP and sustainable food production throughout Europe. Subjects raised in this press release will be discussed in more depth during workshops and further debates. For further information about the congress and the discussed issues, please find the Congress programme, proceedings and within a couple of days also a congress report are available on the Congress website.

Download the dossier at: <http://www.ifoam-eu.org/positions/publications/regulation/>

More information available at www.organic-congress-ifoameu.org

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