

Press Release

COMAGRI position on CAP reform is a vote against agricultural sustainability

MEPs have the power to support to citizens and farmers' demands for real farming change

Brussels, 23/01/2013 – The IFOAM EU Group (1) regrets the ratification of draft negotiating positions on direct payments and rural development by the European Parliament Agriculture Committee today (2). These positions fail to deliver an ambitious reform that would conclusively support greener agriculture post-2013. The European Organic food and farming movement call for MEPs to put the green promise of this CAP reform back on track.

“Today’s vote shows that the Committee is unwilling to put forward proposals that would stimulate a paradigm change in EU agriculture,” said IFOAM EU Group Director, Marco Schlüter.

“Ahead of a full plenary vote, MEPs need to make clear to their Agriculture Committee colleagues that a Parliamentary position which weakens rather than strengthens the overall green credentials of this reform cannot be accepted. It is critical that the new CAP ensures that all farmers are required to undertake a strong and effective package of greening practices under Pillar 1, in order for EU agriculture to transition towards greater sustainability by 2020. Whereas we welcome the Committee’s recognition of organic farming systems (3) as ‘green by definition,’ the introduction of exemptions from greening and a mechanism of questionable certification schemes should not be a substitute for comprehensive greening. As the only directly elected European Institution, the European Parliament has to be bold in counteracting the powerful vested interests that seek to maintain the status quo by sustaining industrial farming practices.”

Stephen Meredith, Policy Coordinator added:

“Comprehensive greening of Pillar 1 must be complimented with effective Pillar 2 rural development measures that support and stimulate an overall transition to sustainability. With rural development funding facing the threat of deep cuts in the overall CAP budget it is essential that MEPs secure strong and robust budget allocations for the environment and agro-ecological approaches. Budget allocations must build on current minimum spending levels in order to raise the financial commitment for incentivising increased environment delivery, the production of high quality food and inclusive rural development.

“Under no circumstances should harmful and costly measures such as the introduction of risk management instruments, that promote reckless industrial farming practices, compromise Pillar 2 support for the sustainable development of farming and rural areas. “MEPs must be resolute in pushing for the mainstreaming of sustainable agriculture by prioritising and investing rural development spending in organic farming, agri-environment-climate, high nature



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International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements – EU Regional Group

value farming areas, as well as green food and farming enterprises, knowledge transfer, innovation and cooperation.”

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Notes

- (1) The IFOAM EU Group represents more than 250 member organisations of IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) in the EU-27, the EU accession countries and EFTA. Member organisations include consumer, farmer and processor associations; research, education and advisory organisations; certification bodies and commercial organic companies.
- (2) The European Parliament Committee adopted amendments as part of its draft negotiating position with the Agriculture Council on the Commission’s proposals for direct payments and rural development ahead of a full vote of the European Parliament. See meeting agenda. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/agri/oj/924/924262/924262en.pdf
- (3) IFOAM EU Group. 2010. Organic Food and Farming: A system approach to meet the sustainability challenge, http://www.ifoam-eu.org/workareas/policy/pdf/IFOAMEU_dossier_organic_farming_system_approach.pdf. Find out more about the CAP reform and IFOAM EU’s position via this website: <http://www.ifoam-eu.org/workareas/policy/php/CAP.php>