

## Press Release

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements – EU Regional Group

### **AGRI vote limits possibilities for a greener and fairer CAP**

*Now national and regional leaders must place agro-ecology at heart of CAP implementation*

**Brussels, 30/09/2013** – Today the European Parliament’s Agriculture Committee (COMAGRI) ratified the final agreements on the CAP 2014-2020 made by chief EU negotiators in June and September 2013. MEPs also voted on the CAP transition rules for 2014. IFOAM EU (1) rejects COMAGRI’s endorsement of the agreements, because they cannot deliver a paradigm shift in agricultural sustainability by 2020.

“As lead negotiators for the European Parliament, COMAGRI has failed to respond EU citizens’ calls (3) for more environmentally friendly agriculture and viable rural communities,” said Christopher Stopes, IFOAM EU President. “Although the European Parliament demanded a more sustainable food and farming policy before the trilogue talks began, the final outcome demonstrates COMAGRI negotiators’ indifference to EU citizens’ views. It is a scandal, for example, that the use of fertilisers and pesticides is not completely banned on ecological focus areas under Pillar 1 greening requirements and that many questionable exemptions to greening have been accepted.”

With disproportionate cuts to the rural development budget Member States must make the best use of all the tools under Pillar 1 and 2 to boost the development and expansion of agro-ecological approaches such as organic farming,” said Thomas Fertl, IFOAM EU Vice-President. “In particular, their CAP implementation plans must emphasise organic support schemes, agri-environment, knowledge transfer and innovation in new rural development programmes.”

IFOAM EU calls on EU Leaders and national and regional authorities to shift the CAP towards a new agro-ecology agenda. This can still be achieved by ensuring:

- Pillar 1 greening only recognises farmers making a genuine contribution to environmental delivery and climate action. Implementing rules should guarantee that the development of organic farming is not undermined by low-level greening equivalence. Strict fertiliser and pesticide management criteria on ecological focus areas must be implemented.
- The cuts to the Pillar 2 budget are reduced by shifting at least 15% of Pillar 1 funding to Pillar 2. Moves to shift 25% of Pillar 2 funding back to Pillar 1 – which would weaken support for advanced sustainability – must be rejected.
- Member States spend at least 50% of their rural development budget on advanced sustainability. They should make full use of the higher EU co-financing rates of up to 75% for environmental operations as well as the higher investment support rates for organic farming and agri-environment.
- A comprehensive package or “thematic sub-programme” of rural development measures for organic farming is included as a key part of implementation. This should include support for agri-environment, advisory services, investments, innovation, producer groups and quality schemes (3).

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- 1) **IFOAM EU** represents more than 160 member organizations in the EU-28, the EU accession countries and EFTA. Member organizations span the entire organic food chain and beyond: from farmers and processors organisations, retailers, certifiers, consultants, traders and researchers to environmental and consumer advocacy bodies
- 2) Eurobarometer, 2011 [ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_368\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_368_en.pdf)
- 3) Organic Approaches to Rural Development Policy Factsheets, IFOAM EU Group 2012 [www.ifoam-eu.org/positions/factsheets/Pdf/Envi\\_Delivery\\_RD.pdf](http://www.ifoam-eu.org/positions/factsheets/Pdf/Envi_Delivery_RD.pdf)