

## **Ministers must push real CAP reform to protect EU water and soil resources**

### **Informal farm minister meeting must recognise potential of organic farming systems to deliver sustainability benefits under CAP**

**Brussels, 10/09/12** – On the occasion of today's Informal Council of EU Farm Ministers<sup>1</sup>, where the management of the EU's land, soil and waters resources are discussed, the IFOAM EU Group<sup>2</sup> reminds the Ministers that the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) budget must be used to effectively ensure the shift towards a sustainable food system, especially as financial means are under pressure as well as natural resources.

Christopher Stopes, President of the IFOAM EU Group, said: "The interdependence between farming and our natural resources is the key to ensuring our long-term food security. This serves to highlight the urgency of confronting major environmental challenges facing EU food production. Organic farming is well placed to respond to challenges such as water management, soil protection and climate change because it provides a system approach to resource efficiency and climate action<sup>3</sup>, as well as offering solutions to drive greater sustainability across the sector. Therefore **Ministers must ensure that discussions on these critical issues and the CAP reform are followed by concrete actions that can truly shift EU agriculture towards real and effective sustainability, with a clear emphasis on organic farming** and rural development measures which continue to offer the most potential to deliver targeted sustainable outcomes."

Marco Schlüter, Director of the IFOAM EU Group, added: "EU citizens demand value for their tax money. This means the transformation of the next CAP into a **greener and smarter farming policy, as demonstrated by the GoodFoodMarch** to Brussels<sup>4</sup>. It is crucial that Ministers respond to the citizens' demands by re-focusing the new CAP so that it address the major agricultural and environmental challenges facing both farmers and society at large. This can be achieved firstly by significant greening of all CAP payments and secondly by prioritising organic farming and high nature value farming systems. The Cypriot EU Presidency recently stated that cuts to the EU Budget 2014-2020, in particular CAP funding for Pillar II, are inevitable. Farm Ministers must now show that the new CAP can set EU food and farming on the right path towards full sustainability by 2020 to guarantee sufficient funding, especially for rural development measures that are crucial for shaping the farming of the future."

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More information:

IFOAM EU Group, phone + 32-2-280 12 23, Fax: +32-2-735 73 81, [info@ifoam-eu.org](mailto:info@ifoam-eu.org), [www.ifoam-eu.org](http://www.ifoam-eu.org)

## Notes

- (1) Informal Agriculture and Fisheries Council, "Conserving Europe's potential for the production of food, renewables and public goods: addressing water scarcity and land abandonment linked to adverse climate conditions" 09.09.2012 - 11.09.2012, Nicosia Cyprus, <http://www.cy2012.eu/index.php/en/political-calendar/areas/agriculture-and-fisheries/event-675>
- (2) The IFOAM EU Group is the European working level within the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements. It brings together more than 250 organisations, associations and enterprises from all EU-27, EFTA and candidate countries. IFOAM's goal is the worldwide adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound systems that are based on the principles of Organic Agriculture
- (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](http://www.ifoam-eu.org/workareas/policy/pdf/IFOAMEU_dossier_organic_farming_system_approach.pdf); IFOAM EU Group, The contribution of Organic agriculture to Climate change mitigation; [http://www.ifoam.org/growing\\_organic/1\\_arguments\\_for\\_organic/environmental\\_benefits/pdfs/IFOAM-CC-Mitigation-Web.pdf](http://www.ifoam.org/growing_organic/1_arguments_for_organic/environmental_benefits/pdfs/IFOAM-CC-Mitigation-Web.pdf); Resource Efficiency and Organic Farming: facing Up to the Challenge, IFOAM EU Group, <http://www.ifoam-eu.org/positions/Papers/pdf/Resource-Efficiency-Brochure-201112.pdf>  
The IFOAM EU Group will host a conference on Future farming in times of climate change and water scarcity entitled "Rural development and sustainable farming approaches for Mediterranean areas and beyond" in Cyprus on the 26 September 2012 as part of the Organic Days between 24 and 26 September. To register <http://organicdays.eu/registration/>
- (4) Good Food March <http://www.goodfoodmarch.eu>
- (5) EU Presidency Issues Paper: Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, Informal Meeting of Ministers and Secretaries of State for European Affairs, Nicosia, 30 August 2012 <http://www.cy2012.eu/index.php/en/file/t4OXQzwQKPz2nxXo9+AUZw==>