

Future EU promotional policy must focus on sustainability

Brussels, 21/11/2012 – IFOAM EU (1) welcomes the European Parliament's recognition of the increasing consumer demand for organic products and the need to stimulate the development of organic production by enhanced promotion, as expressed in its resolution on Promotion measures for agricultural products (2). IFOAM EU demands that the new promotional policy contribute to the shift towards agricultural practices which use natural resources sustainably and contribute to employment in rural areas. Therefore, a clear focus should be put on the promotion of the new organic EU logo and organic production.

"A recent poll has shown that the new EU Organic logo is still widely unknown (4). It is crucial that EU promotion policy contributes to a greater consumer awareness of the logo and the legally protected terms such as "organic", "ecologic" and "biologique" which clearly identify that products meet a wide range of well-founded sustainability standards and are certified according to the European Organic Regulation 834/2007/EC" says Director Marco Schlüter. "The organic market is growing. Tools to promote and raise awareness of organic food and farming can further help stimulate the development of the organic market, as they inform consumers of the important role organic farming plays in producing high quality food, delivering environmental public goods and contributing to sustainable rural development across the European Union."

"We welcome many of the recommendations put forward, including multi-country campaigns and more flexibility for programmes to respond to fluctuating market conditions, as well support for local and regional markets. The EU promotional policy still has a largely untapped potential to contribute to the expansion of agro-ecological approaches and organic farming systems in Europe. They must be used to address the urgent resource challenges we face, if we are to achieve future food security (3)" adds Policy Manager Antje Kölling. "The promotion of local products plays an important role in the development of sustainable farming and generating greater income in rural areas and must be supported. However, we do not recommend a new labelling regime for local products as it would not adequately address the specific needs of local and small producers who wish to enter into short supply chains and would generate consumer confusion." IFOAM EU calls on the European Commission to consider these issues in its legislative proposals on promotional policy, expected mid-2013.

More information:

IFOAM EU Group, phone: + 32-2-280 12 23, fax: +32-2-735 73 81

info@ifoam-eu.org, www.ifoam-eu.org

Footnotes:

- (1) The **IFOAM EU Group** represents more than 300 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) Motion for a European Parliament Resolution on promotion measures and information provision for agricultural products: what strategy for promoting the tastes of Europe www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2012-0286&language=EN
- (3) IFOAM EU Group, 2010. Organic food and farming: A system approach to meet the sustainability challenge: www.ifoam-eu.org/workareas/policy/pdf/IFOAMEU_dossier_organic_farming_system_approach.pdf
- (4) Two years after the introduction of the new EU organic logo in July 2010 only 24% of those surveyed had an awareness of the logo. See Special Eurobarometer 389 *Europeans' attitudes towards food security, food quality and the countryside* http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/survey/2012/389_en.pdf.