

## **Further information required on hen density scandal**

*IFOAM EU condemns all fraud attempts and requests full clarification of facts*

**Brussels, 26/02/2013** – This weekend news has been released of scandal regarding egg production in Germany. It is alleged that in 2010-2011 a number of farms housed more hens than allowed by the regulations and standards governing the “barn”, “free-range” and “organic” indications under which the eggs were sold. In the case of the organic eggs, this would mean that they came from farms certified as organic, but that the farmers did not respect the organic requirements for maximum stocking density. IFOAM EU (1) condemns all attempts to commit fraud and circumvent organic regulations and standards.

“The welfare of animals is one of the key conditions for producing organic eggs, in addition to using organic and GMO-free feed. Compliance with stocking densities is therefore an essential prerequisite to being organic,” states Christopher Stopes, IFOAM EU President. “If the allegations are shown to be true, consumers are clearly harmed by such criminal activity, as are the many thousands of organic farmers and businesses throughout Europe who honestly uphold the highest standards of food production in Europe.”

The case is still open, no legal judgements have been made and little information is currently available. Fraud must be punished, but conclusions should not be drawn pre-maturely. If the allegations are confirmed and once the source of the problem identified and analysed, IFOAM EU Group will make additional, constructive proposals for specific improvements to the control system including investigative control strategies. The [most recent proposal](#) by the IFOAM EU Group on how to improve control in organic production and processing was issued in October 2012.

More information:

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Notes

- (1) The IFOAM EU Group represents more than 160 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.