

Commission report on Organic Regulation highlights achievements and future opportunities

Brussels, 14/05/2012 – On Friday, May 11, 2012 the European Commission publishes its report to the Council on the application of Organic Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 (1). The IFOAM EU Group notes that the long announced report is now finally published and that it will be discussed in the June Council under the Danish Presidency.

"This Commission report to the Council opens a debate among stakeholders as the report raises five main question for the further development of the EU organic regulation", explains Marco Schlüter, IFOAM EU Group Director. "We acknowledge the need for a detailed analysis of potential challenges and support a focused improvement of the organic regulation where and if necessary. The IFOAM EU Group will actively work with our stakeholders to contribute to this debate and ensure that the voice of the organic movement is heard clearly."

"However, since it came into force in 2009, the new Organic Regulation and its implementing rules have been developed and improved, with the introduction of standards for organic aquaculture, for yeast and for wine. The original organic regulation has been completely replaced. The organic sector looks forward to a period of stability with the new regulation", highlights Christopher Stopes, IFOAM EU Group President. "Nevertheless, we recognise the need to continue the process of fine tuning the regulation to overcome weaknesses and enable the sector to continue to develop".

"We acknowledge that the Commission report focuses on the simplification and scope of the regulation; import and control organisation; approaches towards GMO and co-existence, as well as functioning of internal market", added Bavo van den Idsert, IFOAM EU Group Vice-President. "The IFOAM EU Group highlights the importance of the use of the flexibility rule in organic regulation to deal with the different speed of development of organic farming in the EU, the use of risk based approaches in control and inspection and the development of rules for the environmental performance for organic processing."

The Commission report is the first step of an evaluation of the regulation initiated by Commissioner Ciolos that will be the subject of discussion in the Commission, the Council, the European Parliament and among all organic stakeholders. This review will be supported by an evaluation to be completed by independent experts and may be concluded with specific legal proposals to amend Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 at the end of 2013."

Andrzej Szeremeta, Food Legislation Coordinator at the IFOAM EU Group added: "The IFOAM EU Group has recently published a dossier on the organic regulation: *European Organic Regulations (EC) 834/2007, 889/2008 and 1235/2008 - An evaluation of the first three years - Looking for further development* (3). This publication provides the context and background for the ongoing review and evaluation."

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

Press Release

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements – EU Regional Group

NOTES:

- (1) European Commission report to the Council on the application of organic regulation has been prepared according article 41 of the Regulation (EC) No 834/2007. It is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/files/eu-policy/expert-recommendations/1_EN_ACT_part1.pdf
- (2) 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.
- (3) ***European Organic Regulations (EC) 834/2007, 889/2008 and 1235/2008 - An evaluation of the first three years - Looking for further development*** has been launched by the IFOAM EU Group in April 2012 during 6th European Organic Congress in Copenhagen, Denmark. It is available at: http://www.ifoam.org/about_ifoam/around_world/eu_group-new/positions/publications/regulation/