Dear reader,

IFOAM EU Group is becoming a more and more important partner on the European scene and the past months were rich in many important events for the organic sector, which were taking place in Central Europe and correspond with great developments of organic food and farming in this region.

The *First International Conference on Organic Food Quality and Health Research* was held in Prague, Czech Republic, in May. During the opening ceremony many speakers highlighted the role of TP Organics and especially IFOAM EU Group in this initiative. Jean-Francois Hulot, Head of the Organic Farming Unit in the European Commission appreciated that TP Organics and IFOAM EU Group are creating important interactions between policy makers, scientists and stakeholders from the organic sector. Jean-Francois Hulot stated, “Policy makers, even scientists without this great help cannot fix the right priorities for the sector development, for the research agenda and so on. We as the Commission really appreciate this opportunity for interactions, consultations and getting feedback from the organic sector, where TP Organics and IFOAM EU Group have done a great job within the past years.”

Following this scientific conference, the *Organic Marketing Forum - 6th International Meeting on Processing and Marketing Organic Products and Raw Materials* was held on the 26th and 27th of May in Warsaw, Poland. This meeting aimed at European farmers, processors and traders and was one of the most important annual international meetings for the organic sector in Central and Eastern Europe. IFOAM EU Group was the patron of this important event.

The *5th European Organic Congress* in Gödöllő, Hungary, May 31st to June 1st, was an official conference of the EU Hungarian Presidency. It was organised in cooperation with the IFOAM EU Group, Hungarian Ministry for Rural Development, Biokontroll Hungária and Magyar Biokultúra Szövetésé and was, without any doubts, politically and strategically the most important meeting for the organic sector so far in Central Europe. The Congress took place following the informal meeting of agriculture Ministers under the Hungarian presidency and at a decisive point in time for the debate on the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). IFOAM EU Group was very successful in bringing together top policy speakers from Brussels and national representations as well as academic and organic sector representatives. I personally appreciated that part of the programme was focused on new member states.

Finally I would like to thank all of you who joined us in Lednice, Czech Republic for *Biocademy 2011*, June 29th to July 1st – 11th annual meeting, which this year focused on regional organic foodstuff, regional development and the role of the organic farming climate change strategy.

With best wishes,
Karolina Dytrtová
Vice President of the IFOAM EU Group
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1. News/Updates of IFOAM EU Working Fields

1.1 Regulation

**Organic Wine**
IFOAM EU Group has begun working jointly with European Organic Winemaking Carta to prepare a position on the organic wine making implementing rules for Regulation (EC) No 834/2007. Envisaging that the SCOF (Standing Committee on Organic Food and Farming) discusses wine making rules in its meeting on 7th and 8th July, the IFOAM EU group has adopted a position on sulphite reduction and communicated this to the European Commission on 5th July.


**IFOAM EU Poultry Expert Group Meets in Rennes, France**
The IFOAM EU poultry expert group met in Rennes, France on May 10-11 to discuss a proposal for an IFOAM EU position on poultry production. The meeting was preceded by an excursion to two Breton organic poultry farms and discussions with local poultry farmers.

The experts’ recommendation has been discussed in the IFOAM EU Group meeting in June in Hungary as soon as a final agreement will be found, the new position will be published as a follow up on the IFOAM EU Group position paper on poultry production and rearing from August 2010.

**IFOAM EU moderates meeting between the Commission and the EOCC on imports**
The IFOAM EU Group met with the Head of the Organic Unit, DG AGRI and a representative of the European Organic Certifiers’ Council (EOCC) to discuss the guidelines and application procedures for control bodies who wish to be on the EU Commission’s list of organisations recognised for controlling and certifying imports of organic products to the EU.

The first application rounds have caused confusion and have taken longer than foreseen and this has spurred criticism from the control- and certification bodies’ (CBs) organisation.

As an outcome of the meeting, the EOCC will be in dialogue with the Commission to develop a Question and Answer document, to guide CBs in the application process.

[View presentation on the current status EU import regulations](#)
1.2 Policy

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

IFOAM EU invited to informal agriculture council meeting in Debrecen

EU Farm Ministers exchanged views on how the CAP should contribute to a sustainable livestock sector at an informal council meeting in Debrecen, Hungary, on the 31st May and 1st of June. For the first time ever a delegation from the IFOAM EU Group was privileged to be invited as an observer at the meeting. Christopher Stopes, President of IFOAM EU Group, highlighted on this occasion the critical unsustainability of current livestock production systems that are heavily dependent on livestock feeds imported from all around the world. In contrast organic systems place a focus on grass and clover based systems and other livestock feed produced on the farm and linked holdings.

The meeting was overshadowed by the tragic EHEC outbreak in Germany. The organic sector called on the authorities to follow all possible leads to identify the source of the EHEC outbreak and urged authorities to comprehensively clarify the facts, while pointing out that no premature denunciations of farming systems should be made. Unfortunately such allegations had been reported by some members of the media.

(For more information regarding the EHEC outbreak see the Quality Production and Food Chain section of the newsletter.)
Members of the European Parliament have adopted the report on the “The CAP towards 2020” by rapporteur Albert Deß, MEP on June 23rd. Although the resolution includes points which seek to promote a fair and greener CAP we believe that it is still not ambitious enough. The resolution, for instance, outlines the commitment of MEPs towards an adequately financed 2nd Pillar in the next financial period, however it fails to support a truly sustainable model of agriculture across both Pillars. Responding to the adoption of the report the IFOAM EU Group called on the Commission and the Council to adopt the recommendations of Parliament in its commitment to create a strong rural development policy to improve the viability of rural economies and rural societies; the EU also needs to further develop and establish food and farming systems with a comprehensive approach towards sustainability, an approach that organic farming can deliver. IFOAM EU Group urges MEPs to be more courageous in the next round of the CAP decision-making process in seeking to meet the on-going environmental and social challenges faced by the European Union.

Further information can be found on our website http://www.ifoam.org/about_ifoam/around_world/eu_group-new/workareas/policy/pdf/110623-PR-IFOAM-EU-CAP-vote.pdf.

The IFOAM EU Group is committed to staying involved in the rural development discussions and coordinating the exchange of contacts and publications for best practices and solutions.
Commission proposes to freeze CAP spending, uncertainties in rural development funding.

Budget proposals published by the Commission on the 29th of June, under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, will see the CAP budget frozen at 2013 levels over the next 7-year financial period. The total allocation of funding for the CAP will now stand at €371.7bn representing 36.2% of total EU budget compared to 39.4% for the current financial period (2007-2013). Under the proposals the CAP two-pillar structure will be retained with €281.8bn allocated for direct payments and agricultural market measures under Pillar I and €89.9bn for rural development under Pillar II. The Commission has announced to make proposals to permit flexibility between the two pillars. The IFOAM EU Group underlines that this flexibility must not be used to reallocate funding from Pillar II to Pillar I, as this could have significant implications for the organic sector, for peripheral regions and rural development policies as a whole.

As part of the proposals the Commission has called for 30% of direct payments to be conditional on a number of greening measures that go beyond cross-compliance. The Commission also wants to gradually bring about a fairer distribution of CAP spending across all of the EU-27. The Commission aims to close the gap by one third between current levels and 90% of the EU-27 average by 2020, financed proportionally by member states whose direct payments are above the average. Capping will apply for direct payments of larger farmers. This will be assessed in the context of economies of scale and direct employment.

A further €15.2bn of additional funding has been allocated for research and innovation for food security, the bio-economy and sustainable economy (€4.5bn), food safety (€2.2bn), reserves for agricultural crises (€3.5 billion), food support programmes (€2.5 billion), and the European Globalisation Fund (up to €2.5 billion) to compensate for the impact of international trade agreements.

IFOAM EU press release is available here

IFOAM EU meets Commission officials to discuss future of the CAP

A delegation of the IFOAM EU Executive board (Vice-Presidents Thomas Dosch and Thomas Fertl) together with Marco Schlüter, Director of the IFOAM EU Group and Antje Kölling as Policy Coordinator held several meetings with European Commission officials on the 21st June to discuss the future of the CAP. Discussions focused on the issue of greening, the strengthening of the second pillar, mainstreaming sustainability across all measures and the promotion of organic farming. The overall atmosphere of discussions was very constructive.

Expert meeting held on 2nd June

The IFOAM EU group held an expert meeting on the future of the CAP on June 2nd. A major point of discussion was the evaluation of the 5th European Organic Congress held in Gödöllö, Hungary. The current state of play in the CAP reform debate was also assessed, particularly regarding the greening of the 1st pillar and the role of the 2nd pillar. Progressive work on organic regulation as an integral part of the EU agricultural policy was another point of discussion. These discussions looked at the rules on organic wine and greenhouse gas production as well. Due to the urgency of the issue, the outbreak of EHEC in Germany was also discussed.
European Court of Auditors report on direct payments

A European Court of Auditors report has questioned the current management of the Single Payment Scheme (SPS). The report published on the 29th of June found that although the scheme supports farmer incomes and maintains farmland in good agricultural and environmental conditions, weaknesses and incoherence exist. Different policy implementations among the 17 applicable member states means that Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC) and cross-compliance measures for beneficiaries vary dramatically or in some cases are non-existent. The report also found that the loose definition of an “active farmer” has broadened the scope of eligibility for direct payments since the introduction SPS. Beneficiaries now include individuals and organisations who have no or only limited interaction in farming activities.

Further information can be found here
www.beras.eu/

NGO Factsheets launched: The Truth behind the CAP

The IFOAM EU Group in partnership with a number of environmental NGOs launched a series of factsheets entitled “The Truth behind the CAP: 13 reasons for green reform” in the European Parliament on June 23rd. The factsheets were presented in a workshop on the EU’s Food Policy that was co-organised by Finnish MEP Sirpa Pietikäinen and the development group APRODEV. The factsheets were also presented to several MEPs after the plenary debate of the “The CAP towards 2020” report. The factsheets present facts and figures, relevant cases studies, and recommendations for politicians across key environmental areas related to CAP reform. Topics covered include including Wildlife, Climate Change, Biodiversity, Food Consumption, Genetic Resources, Organic Agriculture, Grasslands, High Nature Value Farming, Pesticides, Global Impact of EU Agriculture, Soil, Water Quality and Water Scarcity.

The factsheets are now available on our website
**MEPs adopted opinion on national GMO cultivation bans**

European Parliament adopted on the 5th of July its opinion on the possibility for Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory. The IFOAM EU Group welcomed in a press release MEPs’ support for a change of EU legislation that would finally oblige all member states to take the appropriate measures to avoid the unintended presence of GMOs in other products and to establish liability systems that would ensure that the polluter would have to pay in cases of GMO contamination, as well as the strengthened list of grounds and legal certainty to restrict or ban the cultivation of GMOs which strengthens the possibility to protect food production and environment in whole regions. At the same time, IFOAM EU underlined that EU wide legislation is needed for the full protection of environment, human health, animal health and the economic viability of the GMO-free food and feed sector.

**Cioloş doubts that GMOs meet EU consumer’s quality demands**

In an interview with the Romanian newspaper, Adeverul, Commissioner Cioloş reflecting on United States’ open door policy on GMOs said that food production in the EU should respond to consumer demands for quality and provenance. Stressing that GMOs do not fall under his portfolio he added that he did not see GMOs crops as the magic bullet for the future of European agriculture, which should rather focus on its strengths such as the diversity and quality of local products.

**Read more here.**

**GM potatoes uprooted in Belgium**

On May 29th, a demonstration called by the Field Liberation Movement to free the fields of GM potatoes saw about 500 activists protesting in Wetteren (Belgium). The GMO potato trial was part of a research project of Ghent University. The University reacted to this action by firing a researcher who participated in the demonstration, for “gross misconduct”.

More information and a petition to support the researcher’s re-instating can be found here. http://www.gmo-free-regions.org/gmo-free-regions/belgium/gmo-free-news-from-belgium/news/en/23885.html
Climate Change & Biodiversity

IFOAM EU on ‘Seeds for a sustainable future’ conference in European Parliament

A conference on “Seeds for a sustainable future” was hosted by the Greens–European Free Alliance in the European Parliament in Brussels on May 31st. It brought together a wide range of stakeholders including members of the Commission, MEPs, NGOs, farmers and seed savers from across the European Union. The IFOAM EU Group was represented by Maaike Raaijmakers (Bionext, NL) who raised key demands for the EU seed legislation revision from the perspective of the organic sector. Gebhard Rossmanith, an organic seed producer and member of the IFOAM EU Group seed taskforce, added that there is an urgent need for seed legislation that enables seed producers and farmers to market a higher diversity of seed. At the conference, a petition from over 58,000 EU citizens including farmers and seed savers was presented to Margrete Auken, MEP, member of the European Parliaments Petitions Committee. The petition highlights a number of issues including the protection of farmers’ rights, calls for a ban on patenting plants and the use of GMOs and the need to protect old and existing plant varieties.

Climate change found to already have impacts on crop yields

Scientists in the United States have found that climate change is already having an effect on crop yields worldwide. Using crop yield models with and without changes in temperature and rainfall between 1980 and 2008, the study published in the journal of Science estimated that climate change has resulted in a fall in global output of 5.5% for wheat and 3.8% for corn and improvements in yields for soya and rice in some regions, with reduced rice output in warmer countries.

IFOAM EU group calls for legal framework that eases crop diversity

The IFOAM EU group submitted a contribution to the European Commission’s stakeholder consultation on possible scenarios for the review of the EU legislation on the marketing of seed and plant propagating material. In its contribution, the IFOAM EU Group calls for a legislation that lifts burdens and restrictions that hinder the maintenance and development of crop biodiversity in farming and gardening. Diversity of taste, freedom of choice for consumers as well as pressing future challenges such as biodiversity loss and climate change should be strongly considered in the review process. IFOAM EU underlines that different kinds of markets for seed and plan propagating material exist, for example in the area of special quality foods and raw materials for specific processed products. IFOAM EU Group also demands that transparency in breeding techniques should enable seed users to make a choice for varieties where certain novel breeding techniques have not been used. The contribution has been elaborated by the seed taskforce and confirmed by the board.

Photo: BLE

Photo: DG SANCO
Quality Production and Food Chain

E. coli outbreak in Germany and its consequences on the organic sector

Since the beginning of May, an outbreak of a new strain of E.Coli has affected mainly Northern Germany, but also other parts of Europe. The tragic outbreak led to about 3000 cases of illness and approximately 40 deaths. The IFOAM EU Group expressed its deepest sympathy to all those affected by the outbreak and called for most urgent research into the cause of the outbreak and preventive measures on 3rd June.

Organically grown cucumbers have initially been suspected to be the source of infections. Some media has blamed organic farming on unjustified grounds as being the cause of this outbreak. This hypothesis has been refuted, but despite the fact that the E.Coli outbreak had nothing to do with organic farming methods, many organic growers and retailers were affected by significant income losses due to consumers’ denial of fresh vegetables that lasted several weeks. To react to the situation and to update IFOAM EU members on the situation, an IFOAM EU Group task force on E.Coli has launched a web page on E.Coli.

A delegation of the IFOAM EU Group has underlined, in talks with DG AGRI officials on 21st June, that in some member states organic farmers have been heavily targeted by the media and should therefore be strongly considered for compensation. Moreover, promotion campaigns should explain to consumers that natural products are still the best choice, while health risks have to be solved by adapted rules.

German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) found high probability of responsibility of fenugreek seeds for EHEC O104:H4 outbreak on 30th June

According to a press release the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has launched on 5th July, the source of the E.Coli outbreak seems to have been identified. BfR carried out a preliminary risk assessment on the relevance of sprouts and sprout seeds in connection with the outbreak event of EHEC O104:H4 in Germany. BfR reaches the conclusion that there is a high probability that fenugreek seeds used for sprout production were the cause underlying the outbreak.

The European Commission has unlocked, first 150, then 210 million Euros to compensate for vegetable producers’ losses caused by the E.Coli crisis. The IFOAM EU group has asked for sufficient compensation of farmers and EU wide coordination in this issue.

Consumers are advised to continue to refrain from the consumption of raw sprouts. As a matter of principle, BfR recommends to comply with the general rules of kitchen hygiene also when dealing with sprouts.

Further information:
• BfR website on EHEC:
• EFSA/ECDC 2011: Joint Rapid Risk Assessment, Cluster of haemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) in Bordeaux, France 29 June 2011 (updated from 24 June)
The Consequences of the E.coli outbreak on European organic Businesses

Interview with Antonio Lavao, Frunet, Spain:
“Once you are targeted you lose your place in the market”

Frunet is a privately owned Spanish company, whose cucumbers were initially blamed for being the cause of the outbreak of the dangerous E.Coli strain in Germany, which was proven to be untrue only 10 days later. Frunet began in 1996, and is an intermediate company between organic producers and retailers (supplying many major supermarkets all over Europe). It now delivers to wholesalers all over Europe with over 140 employees and 14 growers supplying Frunet with fresh produce including organic cucumbers, tomatoes and other vegetables. In an interview with IFOAM EU Group on June 29th, Antonio Lavao, General Manager of Frunet, outlined the impacts of the situation on his company.

IFOAM EU office: What were the consequences for you and your suppliers following the outbreak of this new and harmful strain of E.coli in Germany?

Antonio Lavao: We have lost many customers, and also some of our former suppliers and growers went to other distributors. Once you are targeted you lose your place in the market- it is difficult to survive now and I will have to start from zero. I don’t blame German officials for intentionally accusing and harming the organic sector or even my company; I believe they were under immense pressure from the media to quickly deliver an explanation for the tragic situation. Suddenly people were dying in German cities, this biggest European economy found itself at the bottom and needed to place the tension on someone else. But the authorities should have realized much earlier how much damage they caused by dropping a simple name!

Were the Spanish and the EU crisis management of help and is the compensation offered by the EU sufficient in this situation?
The EU crisis management in the beginning was hardly existent: The EU must have known that the German authorities were making a huge mistake in accusing Spanish products, but they did nothing to stop the initial accusations. The compensation will hopefully be helpful for the farmers, but Frunet as a distributor will not receive any compensation from the fund that has recently been proposed by the EU Commission. The Spanish authorities in the beginning only supported companies very locally. Everyone appears frightened by the German influence within the EU – and I have no strong support in Spain.

Are the affected Spanish companies taking any legal steps? I am the only one in Europe who has brought Hamburg’s authorities to court. No one else has yet stepped forward to hold accountable those responsible for damaging the lives of so many people. I have lost everything, so I have nothing to lose. All Spanish companies had to destroy huge amounts of products, not only cucumbers, with the promise from the EU that they will be reimbursed. But no one provided any assistance for this trial.

What do you expect for the future of Frunet?
Last week we received a public apology from the Hamburg officials, which was one of our victories so far, but we are still awaiting the release of all laboratory tests and documentation used to wrongly accuse Frunets products. We will now bring the lawsuit to court, the whole process will possibly take up to three years and will end up costing me a lot of money. The German authorities will do everything in their power to defend themselves because if they are found guilty, all affected companies in Europe will step forward. It is going to be difficult to win a trial in their (German authorities’) home state, but I am 90% sure that we will win! I want to stress that this is not a fight against Germany, the German people are my customers and I want to be able to continue my work! But, at the end of the day I am alone against the most powerful economy in Europe. But if no one has the courage to tell them that they were wrong, then it has to be me.
Quality package and direct sale.

On June 10th, Anamarija Slabe represented IFOAM EU Group and presented IFOAM EU concerns with stakeholders at the Advisory Group on Quality Production at DG Agri, discussing quality package and direct sales. The quality package focuses on improving the system of quality production labels (PDI, PGO, TSG) as well as adding Optional Quality Terms to bring together marketing standards. As it is stated in the proposal, reviewed regulation should not affect the organic sector and this approach should be kept. At the Advisory Group, Anamarija Slabe highlighted that sustainability is a key element for direct sales and local marketing.

On direct sale and local marketing within the Quality Package ComAgri, the EP voted in favor of the amendment requesting the Commission to present “a report on the case for a new local-farming and direct sales labelling scheme to assist producers in marketing their produce locally by September 2012. Plenary votes on Quality package are foreseen for end of September 2011.

The Commission already began an analysis of the situations on local marketing and direct sales by running consultation earlier this year. IFOAM EU Group has provided input. Summary of the first findings were presented at the above mentioned Advisory Group. DG Agri is continuing analysis while following discussions in the Council and Parliament within the Quality Package.

Organic processing letters must be reviewed

On the 20th and 30th of May, IFOAM EU Group addressed two letters (May 20th) (May 30th) to Mr. Jean-François Hulot, Head of Organic Farming Unit at DG Agri. The IFOAM EU Groups called for the review of the technical details for processing of organic foods. The first letter reminds the Commission of previous IFOAM EU Group letters and presents the urgency for action. The second letter provides further positions on ecological responsibility, availability of technical ingredients in organic quality, microorganisms, enzymes, flavourings, smoke flavour and processing methods. IFOAM EU Group considers that the issues relating to food processing have perhaps not received the necessary attention over the last few years and asks the Commission again to work on these issues.

Over 1 billion tonnes of food wasted/spoiled globally per annum, says FAO study

The FAO commissioned a study entitled ‘Global Food Losses & Food Waste’. The study states that some 1.3 billion tonnes of food produced world-wide is either lost along the food chain or wasted, unnecessarily exploiting natural resources such as water, land, energy, labour and capital. It concludes that investment in basic infrastructure, improved harvest techniques, farmer education in developing countries and a fundamental shift in consumer behaviour vis-à-vis food wastage in affluent societies are essential to curb this trend.

EU Farm Commissioner Dacian Ciolos underlined that “we do not have the luxury of throwing away more than a billion tonnes of food annually at global levels”, recalling the importance of the “optimal use of natural resources” in the context of global food security. In the framework of the CAP reform post-2013, the Commission intends to orientate policy towards more sustainable agriculture and “these efforts should not be undermined by contradicting marketing standards & consumer behaviour”.

The full article can be found on the FAO website: http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/74192/icode/


Once the legislation is published in the EU Official Journal, food companies will have three years to adapt to most of the rules, but five years for the rules on nutrition values.

Full article here

**Eco labelling:**
IFOAM EU Group has provided input to a study on the feasibility of introducing the EU Ecolabel in the food, drink and feed sector, which had been carried out during the first months of 2011. On the 26th of May, Cecile Lepers (Synabio) represented IFOAM EU Group at a Stakeholders’ Meeting held at DG Environment. There were strong differences between Stakeholders in favor and against the introduction of Eco Labelling in the food, drink and feed sectors. DG Environment is pushing for the introduction of food labeling and the subject has already been discussed at the meeting of the EU Ecolabelling Board held on June 10th. Based on the study, the European Commission will provide recommendations for the next EU Ecolabelling Board meeting scheduled in November 2011. IFOAM EU stays firm in the position against the Ecolabel for food, as Ecolabelling for food would contribute to consumer’s confusion. “Eco”, “bio” and “organic” are protected terms for organic production within Regulation (EC) No. 834/2007 and Codex Alimentarius.

**European Parliament approved new food labeling rules**
On July 6th, the European Parliament approved new EU food labeling rules. Labels will have to spell out a food’s energy content as well as fat, saturated fat, carbohydrate, sugar, protein and salt levels, in a way that makes them easy for consumers to read. This vote is the final point of negotiations between European Parliament, Council and Commission.

**OECD/FAO OUTLOOK: Global Production Slowdown; High Prices to Stay**
Global farm productivity is set to face a slowdown over the next decade as input costs rise & resources become increasingly scarce, raising further concerns over whether food production can meet growing world demand, according to a new report published by the OECD and the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Meanwhile, the report forecasts commodity prices to fall during the 2011-2020 period from the record highs of early 2011, as markets respond to the higher prices and the opportunities for increased profits. OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurria commented that Governments must improve transparency of both physical and financial markets, encourage investments and remove trade distorting policies. For his part, FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf stated that “action should focus in particular on smallholders in low income food-deficit countries.”

Article Found on: [http://www.agri-outlook.org](http://www.agri-outlook.org)
IFOAM EU Group signs the declaration to ban animal cloning in the EU

The declaration and the clonefreefood campaign www.clonefreefood.eu, which was launched June 22, 2011 by Eurogroup for Animals to gather support to end the use of cloning for food production in Europe. The campaign is a reaction to the failure of the Novel food revision - the process has stopped as no political agreement was achieved by European Institutions. The campaign encourages European citizens, politicians and companies, especially food producers and retailers, to show their opposition to cloning by signing the Declaration.


Feel free to contact Eurogroup for Animals or IFOAM EU Group for further information!

IFOAM EU is looking for organisations to sign the declaration.

MEPs take a stand to limit use of antibiotics

The European Parliament adopted a resolution calling for more research to be conducted and better monitoring procedures put in place on the effects of antimicrobial use on agricultural livestock and domestic pets. Drawing on the links between animal and human health the MEPs contend that the animal husbandry practices should be orientated towards limited use of antibiotics and further research carried out to explore new products and alternative methods which would cut the use of antimicrobials while still controlling animal diseases. They have also asked the Commission to put together a plan to tackle antimicrobial resistance in livestock and pets.
1.3 EU Research Policy/ TP Organics

Bio-economy for Europe: state of play and future potential

In April 2011 DG Research opened a public consultation, on the "bio-based economy for Europe: state of play and future potential" which ran until May 2nd. In response to the consultation, TP Organics developed a paper which outlines the ways organic farming and agro-ecological approaches might interact with a European Bioeconomy.

TP Organics strongly highlighted the need of a Bio-economy concept that clearly drives towards truly sustainable development of agriculture, forestry and fisheries and the related industries. TP Organics’ suggestions will contribute to shaping an alternative “European Strategy and Action Plan towards a sustainable bio-based bio-economy by 2020”, to be adopted at the end of 2011 by the European Commission.

IFOAM EU Group and TP Organics participate in the Conference ‘Sustainable food consumption and production in a resource-constrained world’

May 4-5th, a delegation from IFOAM EU and TP Organics met in Budapest for the conference organised by DG for Research & Innovation and the Hungarian Presidency, which aimed to present the 3rd Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR)report. The report aims to update the driving focus on transitions towards agriculture and food systems in a resource-constrained world.

The Conclusions of the conference have been collected in the “Budapest declaration” which underlines the importance of agricultural research and the pivotal role of the agri-food sector in the future of the European economy. As well it provides two main recommendations that Europe needs to deepen trans-disciplinary research into the social, economic and environmental dimensions of agro-ecological challenges and explore new ways of policy coordination.

Public Research should benefit Society, not Big Business

IFOAM EU Group, in cooperation with NGOs, Universities and other associations from 22 European countries have signed an open letter on future European research and innovation funding. The letter was sent on June 29th to M. Barroso, his cabinet, DG Research heads, all MEPs and the representatives from the EU Member states. The letter criticized that the Commission’s plans for the future research funding programme are biased towards commercial interests and neglects the needs of citizens. The letter suggests that the EU should instead adopt a wide definition of innovation, more relevant to local and social needs, which would allow the non-profit sector to “realise [its] innovation potential”. The letter also claims that the existing processes for research funding allocation have been captured by corporate interests, and calls for “democratic, participatory and accountable” procedures.

To download the full SCAR report here

To download the letter click here
“Bio-economy” must build on sustainable and participative food chains

The Conference “Sustainable food chains for a European Strategy and Action plan towards a sustainable knowledge-based bio-economy by 2020” was held in the European Parliament June 22nd.

Urs Niggli, Steering Committee of TP Organics, stated: “Bio-economy at the moment appears as a ‘gold rush’ for the unlimited use of natural resources – but a responsible bio-economy must initially address the sustainable use of resources. Farmers should not be commodity producers but producers of quality food and managers of the eco-system. We should move from technological innovation to clever innovation! We need integrated, comprehensive and sustainable approaches towards innovation; moreover we need partnerships to work out future systems of natural resource use that involve a broad range of civil society, including farmers, scientists, SMEs and consumers.”

The conference concluded that three main future actions are needed to make the EU initiative for a “Knowledge Based Bio-Economy” a contribution to sustainable development in the EU:

• Focus on comprehensive and sustainable production, retailing and consumption systems and not on single technologies.
• Target the delivery of social benefits and public goods to meet pressing social and environmental challenges; the wider development and application of agro-ecological knowledge through innovation can significantly contribute to this objective. Therefore, the EU must invest in maintenance and further development of the organic farming concept and standard.
• All innovative potential of the whole agriculture and food sector must be captured to contribute to innovation. The potential of farmers and SMEs to contribute innovation and knowledge in the food and farming sector must be fully recognised.
• Creation of transparent relationships between producers and consumers.

The Conference “Sustainable food chains for a European Strategy and Action plan towards a sustainable knowledge-based bio-economy by 2020” has been organized by the IFOAM EU Group in cooperation with EEB (European Environmental Bureau), EFFAT (European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Union), EUROCOOP (European Community of Consumer Cooperatives), SLU (Swedish University of Agriculture Sciences), CAAE (Comité Andaluz de Agricultura Ecológica) and TP Organics. The event brought together more than 100 participants who discussed the upcoming challenges for research and innovation towards a sustainable bio-economy with representatives from the European Commission, the European Parliament, the research community, consumers, farm workers, regions and environmental organisations.
2. IFOAM EU Group Internal Updates

Newest additions to the IFOAM EU Office

**Maya Hernando, Regulation Trainee, Spain**
Since my first years as student at the Agricultural University in Madrid I have been interested in sustainable agriculture. This interest gave me the opportunity to carry out field studies in Nicaragua and New Zealand. I just graduated from Wageningen University (The Netherlands) where I received a deeper understanding of different Organic Production systems. Recently, I joined the IFOAM-EU team in Brussels eager to gain knowledge in regulation procedures in organic agriculture and in the functioning of the EU Institutions. I believe my background as agronomist and my understanding of agriculture from the practical side can provide a helpful input to the IFOAM-EU team.

**Christoph Furtschegger, Research Trainee, Austria**
I just began my traineeship at the IFOAM-EU Group in Brussels. After graduating in political science and sociology at the Leopold-Franzens-University of Innsbruck I completed a four month internship at the Green Party in Austria where I had the chance to gain insights of policy work in local governments and committees. My interest for agricultural concerns arouse especially during the last two years of my study, resulting in a lately published book by the Peter Lang Verlag Frankfurt, that deals with the impact that transnational biotechnology corporations have on nature, our social environment and mankind in general. Working for IFOAM EU – more specifically in the research department – I expect to broaden and deepen my knowledge on the topic and get in contact with new exciting people.
Newest additions to the IFOAM EU Office

Stephen Meredith, Policy Trainee, Ireland
I come from an Irish farming background and recently moved to Belgium after working in Transport Policy in Scotland. I completed my postgraduate studies in International and European Politics and developed an interest in sustainable food and agriculture over the past number of years. I hope that during the course of my traineeship I can contribute constructively to the work of the IFOAM EU Group, learn more about the sector and the policy-making process, and build upon my existing skills and experience.

Pierre-Andre Sultana, Regulation Trainee, France
Son of a French farmer and horse breeder, I spent my youth in a farm located in a Natura 2000 area. This background brought me passion for animals, agriculture and environmental matters. I completed two internships after my masters degree in EU and WTO laws: the first one at the Council of the EU, in Brussels, and the second one in the French Prime Minister services, in Paris. I worked particularly on agriculture (Animal Welfare...) as well as on environment (Biodiversity, Pollution...). At the IFOAM EU Group, I would like to bring my knowledge of the EU policies and to learn a bit more on organic agriculture and on the work of an EU umbrella organisation.
2.1 IFOAM EU Communications Update

IFOAM EU Group Accepting Applications for Trainees to start in September 2011 for 6 months!
The IFOAM EU Group is looking for several trainees starting from September 2011 to February 2012 (for at least 6 months).

Take your chance for an interesting and qualifying experience in the political scene in Brussels!
Please use the application form (found on our website) to apply for the trainee position and return the filled-in form to angela.morell@ifoam-eu.org

The application deadline for this traineeship is 12th July, 2011.

IFOAM EU Group and Social Media
Over the past months we created a social media survey to determine the interest our readers, members and supporters had in IFOAM EU connecting with various social media platforms. We would first like to thank everyone who participated in the survey. We received a large number of responses and very positive feedback. Second, acting on the information we have received, we have established an IFOAM EU Facebook page. The use of this social media platform will enable the IFOAM EU Group to be easily accessible for up-to-date information regarding changes and advancements in the areas of European organic policy, regulation and research.

Social media will assist IFOAM EU in establishing closer connections with its members, supporters and other organic organisations throughout, not only Europe, but worldwide.

Please feel free to Join us on Facebook to stay up-to-date with news and information from the IFOAM EU Group.
2.2 Sponsorship

**Key Sponsor Presentation**

IFOAM EU is very thankful to its financial supporters. So far two key sponsors have been gained for the year 2011: CAAE and ARIZA. Their annual contribution will strengthen IFOAM EU Group by supporting the functional work the group does.

The Dutch company **ARIZA** specializes in processed organic and conventional fruit and vegetable products. ARIZA has nearly 20 years of experience in **organic products** and handles more than 60,000 tonnes of organic fruits and vegetables every year. These are transformed into juices, purees, concentrated juices, blends and compounds. Additionally, ARIZA has a professional R&D department, which developstailmadedrinkconcepts. **Responsibility and sustainability are high up on ARIZA’s agenda** and are shared with their farmers and clients.

The **CAAE Association** promotes organic production and development in Southern Spain, propelling this territory to first place for certified hectares and producers at the European level. The association also works hard for rural development, defence of the environment and the sector cohesion at the national level. Since 2009, it strengthened its links to the IFOAM EU Group because they felt that the work and efforts made by all the persons involved in the organic sector at European level, offer important benefits to the society at large. Especially, if we do it with the unity and mutual support provided by the IFOAM EU Group.

**Support IFOAM EU Group!**

Next to membership fees, **sponsoring** is the only other financial input that can guarantee the carrying out of independent advocacy work and a proper presentation of the organic movement in Brussels.

To gain a wide number of sponsors, the IFOAM EU Group offers a variety of sponsorship options – there is at least one that fits to your needs.

All sponsor possibilities are summarised in a sponsor flyer, available in **English, German, Italian, Spanish, French** and **Polish** languages.
3. Events
3.1 Update on Previous Events

**BtoBIO International Exhibition of Certified Organic Products**

From the 8th to the 11th of May 2011, members of the IFOAM EU Group and TP Organics took part in the International Exhibition in Milano (Italy).

During the fair, TP Organics, in collaboration with PT Bio (Italian arm of TP Organics), held the workshop “Opportunities in innovation and technological development for Italian organic companies.” The workshop had a large participation, and the discussion focused on how to face upcoming challenges (consumer demands, GMOs, direct marketing etc.) concerning the organic sector. Participants were namely representatives of MIPAAF (Italian Ministry of Agriculture), AIAB, Federbio, Coldiretti, IBMA, Brio SpA, Apofruit, Ecor Naturasi SpA and ATQ. During the workshop the topics of Innovation and Knowledge transfer were discussed by the participants; as well the issue of the strong need of SMEs being involved in research projects from the beginning, and defining with other actors (researchers, academia, etc.) the aims and methodology to develop research projects and consequent results.


**FoodSovCap network presents:**

**The MISSING option**

FoodSovCap organised a conference at the European Parliament to present their Communication “The MISSING option for the CAP post 2013” on 3rd May. The conference hosted by Mr. Tarabella, MEP (S&D, Belgium) sought to strengthen relations between FoodSovCap and like-minded MEPs was attended by the IFOAM EU Group. FoodSovCap is a network of more than 300 European organisations which seek to promote the principles of food sovereignty within a reformed CAP.

The basis of the movement has been the European Food Declaration [http://www.europeanfooddeclaration.org/](http://www.europeanfooddeclaration.org/) which was also signed by IFOAM EU Group.

**IFOAM EU board meeting held on 3rd June**

The IFOAM EU group held its board meeting on the 3rd June in Budapest, Hungary. Main points of discussion included the approval of the 2010 budget, a reform of the membership fee system and planning for the next general assembly of IFOAM EU Group.

**Organic Marketing Forum 2011:**

The IFOAM EU Group was patron of the 6th International Meeting on Processing and Marketing Organic Products and Raw Materials, which took place on the 26th and 27th of May in Warsaw and attracted approximately 370 participants from 27 countries. Representing IFOAM EU Group were Dorota Metera (BIOEKSPERT/IFOAM EU Group Board Member) and Andrzej Szeremeta (IFOAM EU office). In her opening speech, Dorota Metera highlighted the need for organic market development and she appreciated the role that the OMF plays in information exchange, networking and organic business development. Issues relating to retail, new market approaches, sustainability, trade, special organic market segments, media, product development, processing, gastronomy, farming, raw material and ecology were also discussed. [www.organic-marketing-forum.org](http://www.organic-marketing-forum.org)

The 5th European Organic Congress was a highly successful two day event organised by the Hungarian EU Presidency, IFOAM EU Group, Hungarian Ministry for Rural Development, Biokontroll Hungária and Magyar Biokultúra Szövetsé, which took place on the 31st of May and the 1st of June in Gödöllő, Hungary. The Congress attracted over 300 participants and provided numerous opportunities to debate on the future of food and farming within the European Union through various panel discussions and workshops involving many high level political speakers as well as speakers from all areas of the scientific and the organic sectors.

During the Congress Sándor Fazekas, host of the event and currently chairman of the Council of EU farm ministers and Hungarian Minister for Rural Development, announced that “Organic production is an environmentally sound farming system which provides opportunities for rural development and delivers income for rural inhabitants in a way that takes the diversity of the European farming landscape into account. Policy has to set clear legal frameworks and support schemes to encourage the development of this top-level sustainable sector.” Fazekas also recognized the efforts of member states in creating comprehensive national organic action plans which involve the promotion of organic food in public canteens, information campaigns, training programmes and the consideration of organic farming in school and university curriculums. “Such measures”, as Fazekas states, “are effective tools to push for sustainable food production and consumption.”

The dedicated work of organic farmers in respect of natural resources’ capacity to regenerate was acknowledged by Dacian Cioloș, European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development. He stressed that organic farmers are on average younger (only 36% of organic farmers are over 55, compared to 56% conventional farmers) and have built trusting relationships with Europeans. Regarding CAP reform, he said that measures to support the uptake and maintenance of organic farming under the second pillar will be maintained, possibly reinforced, to recognise the sustainable character of this farming method. He underlined that the Commission will provide the necessary tools to support organic farming, but that the political decision making has still a way to go on both EU and national level; he encouraged participants to be active in this political process.
3.2 Upcoming Events and Organic Opportunities

This half-day Conference will review how far the ideas on CAP reform, expressed by a wide variety of civil society organisations, have been accepted by the European Institutions; and will consider how civil society can best contribute to the continuing process of shaping that reform over the next year.

Language: English, French, German, possibly Polish

Registration: Please follow the link to register online

Programme: Download the programme of the public ARC Conference HERE

Photo: ARC

IFOAM is NGO Coordinator of 64th UN DPI/NGO Conference: Sustainable Societies – Responsive Citizens
The 64th Annual United Nations Conference of the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) will be held in Bonn from 3 to 5 September 2011. The German government, the City of Bonn, the NGO/DPI Executive Committee and UN Volunteers are organizing the conference.

The event is a strategic steppingstone for NGOs preparing for twenty-year review of the groundbreaking UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The outcomes of the DPI/NGO conference are expected to be integrated into future negotiations of the Rio+20 process taking place next year. Attached you can find an invitation letter to NGO representatives.

For more information visit: www.ifoam.org

IFOAM EU Group announces conference: “Organic food processing - improving quality and environmental performance” to be held in October 14, 2011 during the Natura Food 2011 - 4th Natural Food Fair in EXPO Hall in Łódź, Poland.

The conference aims to discuss the current status of organic processing and quality of processed organic foods in the light of environment performance. The conference will work out recommendation for the development of European organic processing and quality.

In particular the following issues will be discussed:
1. Nitrite/Nitrate in organic meat processing,
2. Organic additives, flavours and starter cultures,
3. Residues traces in organic food,
4. Composition and compounds of organic feed,
5. Food labelling and market diversification,
6. Import requirements for organic food.

Please add the dates to your calendar – more information for the event will be available soon.
Exchange opportunity for food sector entrepreneurs in the food sector

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is a new cross-border business exchange programme aimed at helping new or would-be entrepreneurs to acquire the relevant skills for managing a small or medium-sized enterprise and experienced businessmen or women, looking for fresh perspectives and international cooperation opportunities. This programme is open also for the food sector, more information:

www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu.

Nyeleny Europe Forum, August 2011, Austria

Organisations and initiatives working for an alternative food culture in Europe will meet on the 16th - 21st of August 2011 in Krems, Austria to build a European movement for Food Sovereignty. The organisers aim to bring together a mass meeting of groups, unions, associations and collectives of farmers, students, activists, ecologists, agricultural workers and landless youth and any others who are working for food sovereignty in Europe and in the world.

Please find more information on the website: www.nyeleni2011.net

ORC seeks new Chair of Council of Management

The Organic Research Centre, founded thirty years ago to work on the development of an agricultural and food system that it is equitable and fit for a world of finite and diminishing resources, is now the UK’s leading independent organic research centre. Its activities range from policy development and practical research on innovative farming techniques to public information and education. Both Defra and the EU award substantial research projects to ORC, which draw on the depth of expertise within the organisation and which are frequently implemented in conjunction with partners from across Europe and beyond. A partnership approach is also used for much of the "hands on" work with UK farmers.

The present Chair, who has been in place since the foundation of the Centre, now wishes to stand down. Applications are therefore invited for his successor. The post is not remunerated, but all reasonable expenses will be met. The appointment will be for an initial term of three years.

More information on ORC and the position (including a person specification) can be found under 'Working with us' at http://www.organicresearchcentre.com or requested as documents from Pam Bijak, pam.b@organicresearchcentre.com
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<td>1 July</td>
<td>Beginning of Polish Presidency Programme / Agenda</td>
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<td>13 July</td>
<td>ARC Conference “Consultation of Civil Society on the Future of the CAP - One Year on – Was Our Voice Heard?”</td>
<td>Brussels, Belgium</td>
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<td>14 July</td>
<td>European Environmental Bureau (EEB) Conference “The future CAP in practice: How its greening will ensure our EU and global food security?“: Warsaw, Poland</td>
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<td>19 July</td>
<td>Agriculture and Fisheries Council</td>
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<td>16-21 August</td>
<td>Nyeleny Europe Forum</td>
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<td>3-5 September</td>
<td>64th UN DPI/NGO Conference: Sustainable Societies – Responsive Citizens</td>
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<td>9 November</td>
<td>IFOAM EU Conference on Resource Efficiency in the Food Sector</td>
<td>Brussels, Belgium</td>
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This newsletter exists to inform IFOAM members about the work of the IFOAM EU Group and its liaison and coordination office in Brussels. The IFOAM EU Group is the European Regional Group of the worldwide umbrella organisation IFOAM and is responsible for all matters related to organic farming with a Europe-wide scope. Information IFOAM EU Group: http://www.ifoam-eu.org.

© IFOAM EU GROUP 2004 to 2011 Please send any comments or contributions to the newsletter to communication@ifoam-eu.org. For further information contact your national board member or the office in Brussels.

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