

# EUROPEAN ORGANIC CONGRESS



ROME, 21-22 June, 2010

Project:



Funder:



Organisers:



IFOAM EU

Supporters:



Directorate-General for  
the Environment



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## EU Regulation for Organic Food and Farming: able to deliver solutions to meet future challenges

**Rome 21/06/2010** – The 4<sup>th</sup> European Organic Congress in Rome, organised by IFOAM EU (1) and IAMB (2) provided the first opportunity for the organic movement to evaluate and discuss the new and revised organic EU regulation (3) since it came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009. The regulation - delivering a robust and effective regulatory framework – ensures that organic food and farming is currently the only production system defined at the level of the EU. Thus, organic production is more than ever ready to play a strategic role in shaping sustainable food systems and meeting future challenges. The IFOAM EU Group encourages farmers and other businesses to profit from the clear legal baseline and to convert their farms and businesses to organic.

“Policy must take major advantage of the only legally enforced and comprehensive definition of an EU food and farming system that is able to meet future challenges”, says Christopher Stopes, President of the IFOAM EU Group. “We believe a robust regulatory system, based on effective standards, provides the basis for consumers and citizens to know that if they purchase organic food, they know that they are part of a future oriented solution to the challenges that lie ahead: biodiversity protection, mitigation of climate change, protection of animal welfare and economic development of rural society.”

“Organic farming is the type of agriculture which should be the general farming system in Europe”, declares Paolo de Castro, Chairman of the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee in the European Parliament. “The Parliament - as part of the new co-decision procedure - plays an active role in improving the organic production and ensuring high quality food for consumers.”

“Organic farming has proven its value for decades”, adds IFOAM EU Vice President Bavo van den Idsert. “With this congress the organic sector wants to take responsibility for our regulation, assess the status quo and above all outline the roadmap for further development in cooperation with official authorities. The congress highlights several different issues, including rules for importing organic food into the EU, small farmers and operators, tools for inspection and certification and new standards for organic aquaculture.”

“However, not every detail needs to be regulated at EU level and the diversity within Europe needs to be respected”, comments Thomas Dosch, IFOAM EU Vice President. Whilst the EU regulation must represent the legal baseline, private initiatives and standards can deliver regionally adapted additional standards and systems within the legally enforced framework of the EU regulation. A lot can be done through guidelines, self declarations and codes of conduct by the private sector to meet the increasingly refined demands of organic consumers. The new organic regulation offers an excellent basis to enter into organic business”.

Organised as part of the INTERBIO (4) project, with more than 250 participants from the EU, EFTA and Mediterranean countries, as well as from the US, Latin America and the Middle East, the congress provided the first comprehensive evaluation of the regulatory situation for the organic sector.

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For general information on the 4<sup>th</sup> European Organic Congress go to: [http://www.organic-congress-ifoameu.org/4th\\_Congress\\_Rome.aspx](http://www.organic-congress-ifoameu.org/4th_Congress_Rome.aspx)

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## Notes:

(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. See more at [www.ifoam-eu.org](http://www.ifoam-eu.org)

The European Organic Congress of the IFOAM EU Group is the fourth after the European Organic Congresses in 2007 and 2009 in Brussels and in 2010 in Madrid, providing a platform to discuss present developments that are of high concern for the organic sector. More information to be found at: [www.organic-congress-ifoameu.org](http://www.organic-congress-ifoameu.org).

(2) Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari (IAMB) is one of the four institutes of the International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Studies (CIHEAM). See more at: [www.iamb.it/en](http://www.iamb.it/en)

(3) The new EU Organic Regulation (EC) 834/2007 came into force on 1 of January 2009. A part of the regulation, in particular the aquaculture rules and the labeling rules, including the new organic logo, come into effect from 1 July 2010.

(4) The INTERBIO Project promotes domestic and international demand for organic products, and is financed by the Italian Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies and coordinated by MAIB. See more at [www.interbio.it](http://www.interbio.it)

## Support and Sponsorship note:

The organisers acknowledge co-funding by

- the European Community, Directorate-General for the Environment
- the Italian Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies
- Ariza as main sponsor of the IFOAM EU Group in 2010 - [www.ariza.nl](http://www.ariza.nl)

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