

Finally the EU Organic logo is here but resources are needed to raise consumer awareness

Brussels, March 31, 2010 - The IFOAM EU Group (1) acknowledges the new organic production logo of the EU – the stylised leaf made of EU stars on a green background (2) introduced by the Commission Regulation (EU) No 271/2010 (3) published today in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Christopher Stopes, the IFOAM EU Group President, says: 'The organic sector has been waiting for the new logo following publication of the Organic Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 in 2007. The new obligatory EU organic logo provides the EU with an opportunity for the further development of the organic market in the EU by using the logo to promote organic products among EU consumers.'

Bavo van der Idsert, IFOAM EU Vice-President, says: 'The EU logo for organic food makes a statement to consumers: Organic quality throughout the EU and equivalent quality organic products from outside EU. To strengthen consumer trust we will have to continue our efforts for further harmonisation of organic quality within the EU, to emphasise the quality and values behind the logo. However, the organic sector remains concerned that European food labelling initiatives are focussing on single issues, for example referring to climate change, animal welfare or biodiversity. These and other eco-labelling initiatives risk undermining the organic label which stands for a viable multifunctional approach to food production based on a coherent and consistent approach towards the whole sustainability concept.'

Alexander Beck, the Chair of the IFOAM EU Specialist Group Organic Processing, says: 'Organic producers look forward to the challenges related to the new organic food labelling requirements. After 1 July 2010, the day the new logo will be obligatory for new organic products placed on the market, organic products bearing new EU organic logo will appear on the market. However, for the few next years we will have products with a variety of national organic logo's, the old EU organic logo and the new EU organic logo on the market. The change of labels and packaging will place additional costs on organic producers, thus the organic sector appreciates the transition periods for using old packaging included in the regulation.'

Christopher Stopes adds: 'The new logo will require a wide promotional campaign. The sector will have to invest to integrate the logo on packaging and in communication over the coming years. It seems fair that the Commission and national governments devote sufficient resources to promote the new EU organic logo to consumers.'

End (characters 2628)

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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.

(2) New EU organic logo: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/logo/index_en.htm

(3) COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 271/2010 of 24 March 2010 amending Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, as regards the organic production logo of the European Union (OJ L 084, 31.03.2010, p.19.) <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:084:0019:0022:EN:PDF>