

Dear Members,

You are holding the 17<sup>th</sup> issue of the IFOAM EU Group newsletter in your hand! You might have noticed that this is some time after the last newsletter, for which we apologise.

For this reason I am happy to announce that, from now on, you will get the IFOAM EU Group newsletter eight times a year, and at least two issues this year. The next newsletter will be an extra edition on the revision of the organic regulation (to continue on from the two extra editions last year).

The Brussels office continues to develop very positively. Our team has increased to six after we managed to secure funds from the Commission for two one-year trainees. So we have made a good step forward to serve even better the organic movement and sector in Europe. However, we have had to devote a lot of effort to getting in the national membership contributions for this year.

I would like to highlight one event the office and the whole IFOAM EU Group is focusing its energy on at the moment: **The European Organic [Congress in Brussels on 4-5 December](#)**. More than 3 years after the implementation of the European Organic Action plan has started it is time to assess the current situation of organic food and farming in the EU. However, the Action Plan can only be seen as a start towards a more sustainable agriculture. The Action Plan was poor in some key areas and these weaknesses are now even more crucial points on the agenda. The Congress will help define clear recommendations for setting the right political framework that will support the further, and appropriate, development of organic food and farming.

**You are invited to be part of this process!**



Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read 'Marco Schlueter'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marco Schlueter  
Director IFOAM EU Group

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## 1. Activities of the IFOAM EU Group

### 1.1 Join the European Organic Congress in Brussels!

IFOAM EU Group is organising a European Organic Congress which will be held in Brussels on 4 and 5 December 2007. This high-calibre political event will gather up to 200 participants representing both the organic sector in Europe and EU and national authorities. Under the title "The future of organic food and farming within the reformed CAP - looking at three years of the European action plan and beyond", the congress will look into the future of the European organic sector. It aims to keep organic food and farming high up on the political agenda.



Marian Fischer Boel, EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, will open the congress with a speech on the EU Action Plan on Organic Food and Farming, now nearing completion, and the challenges ahead. A number of other officials from the European Commission and the European Parliament will take part in the event. At the same time, the congress will bring together a broad range of stakeholders from the organic and food sector. For more information, visit the Congress website: [www.organic-congress-ifoameu.org](http://www.organic-congress-ifoameu.org)

Agriculture Commissioner Fischer Boel will open the Congress (here with IFOAM EU president Francis Blake (r.) and director Marco Schlüter)

### 1.2 Revision of the Organic Regulation (2092/91)

**Commission proposal for implementing rules in January 2008?** – The Agricultural Council decided in June '07 on the [new organic regulation](#) (No 834/2007). This concludes the first stage in the process of replacing Council Regulation 2092/91. The focus will now move to the Implementing Rules, which will be critical to the success or failure of this new regulation.

The Commission has produced as a "[non paper](#)" an analysis table on the implementing rules. Further, the Commission plans a public consultation which will start within the next few weeks. It is not clear if this will be just at the expert level or also for the broad public. Following the consultation, the Commission will provide a proposal for the implementing rules to the standing committee on organic food and farming in January.

In the meantime, the IFOAM EU Group has provided a first input on several topics that will be covered by the implementing rules and is working on further position papers:

- [Sodium carbonate in Annex VI B and Potassium bicarbonate in Annex II B](#)
- [Risk based inspection](#)
- [Exceptional Production Rules](#)

More information on our [Revision Info page](#).

### 1.3 IFOAM EU Group/office in Brussels & internal structure

**New office staff** – The IFOAM EU Group office in Brussels welcomed three new staff members since May 2007. Monica Styczek (PL, May 2007) and Andrzej Szeremeta (PL, September 2007) under the European voluntary service scheme will stay one year at the Brussels office and Camilla Mikkelsen (DK, June 2007) will join our team until the end of 2007.

Irina Maia (Portugal), trainee from September 2006, left the office at the end of August. We thank her for great contribution and wishes her all the best for her next challenges.

If you are interested in a [traineeship](#) in the Brussels office from the summer of 2007, have a look at the link.

### 1.4 IFOAM EU Group in public

**Green Week in Brussels** – It was the third time the IFOAM EU Brussels office took part in the annual Green Week, organised by the European Commission to raise awareness about the environment. This year's Green Week was held between 12th and 15th of June at the Charlemagne Building of the Commission under the title "Past Lessons and Future Challenges" (to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Rome).



*The staff of IFOAM EU Group at Green Week 2007*

The IFOAM EU Group was present in this event with a stand offering information material about organic farming and about IFOAM. The stand was well attended, and the IFOAM EU group team demonstrated the benefits and contribution of organic food and farming to the development of the European Union and the challenges ahead. [More](#)

## 1.5 Policy

### **IFOAM EU Group Seminar in Poland: CAP Health Check**

On 12 and 13 July 2007, 40 representatives of the organic food and farming sector in Europe met for a seminar in Pulawy, Poland to discuss in depth the new Organic Regulation and the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013. The seminar had been organised by the IFOAM EU Group. It concluded that the CAP Health Check should be used to address the imminent global challenges, such as climate change, and that organic farming can contribute the solutions to that issue. As the press release following the seminar stated, 'the CAP Health Check should treat the cause, not play with sticking plasters'.

The seminar was co-financed by the European Community, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development. You can find the presentations of the seminar on our [webpage](#).

## 1.6 Research

**Organic research needs** – In July, the IFOAM EU Group forwarded to DG Research a summary of the most urgent research needs of the organic sector. It asked the Commission to include these proposal in the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme.

[Letter to DG Research](#)

[Detailed Proposal IFOAM EU Group](#)

### **Project news:**

\* **ORGAP – Project** - In April 2007, the Organic Action Plan project (ORGAP) - a research project to develop evaluation tools for the European Organic Action Plan – organised its 2nd Advisory Committee meeting in Brussels. Several organic stakeholders participated, including the IFOAM EU Group, which is a partner in the project. The main topics discussed at the meeting were:

- 1) the results of the "meta-evaluation" of national organic action plans of *Germany, Netherlands, England (and partly Denmark)*;
- 2) how to apply ORGAP evaluation concept and toolbox to national action plans; and
- 3) the *areas of conflicts and synergies* between national and EU Organic Action Plans.

ORGAP has also launched an open Forum about "**Stakeholder involvement in Action plans**". You are invited to participate in this Forum.

[See more](#)

**\*ORWINE – 2nd project year** - The three year European research project ORWINE – organic wine – is currently in the second year of farm trials on organic wine farms all over Europe. The aim of the project is to develop processing rules for organic wine as a recommendation for the new organic regulation. As part of its contribution to the project, the IFOAM EU Group has broadened the European focus by supporting a pilot farm in each of Hungary and Portugal. From this year, there are also two in Spain. The stakeholders in these countries have been involved in the project through national stakeholder forums and farm days in June and July this year.

To read more on ORWINE check on [www.orwine.org](http://www.orwine.org) or join the workshop at Biofach 2008.

**\*ORGANIC REVISION** – The 3 year research project organic revision is coming to an end. The results can be downloaded at:

<http://www.organic-revision.org/pub/index.html>

## **2. Decisions/Reports concerning organic farming Amending Regulation 2091/92**

In the official journal you will find all decisions, reports and new laws. The electronic form of the official journal can be found under:  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOIndex.do?ihmlang=en>

### **Overview of all amendments to Council Regulation 2092/91**

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/organic/standards/amendments.htm>

#### **Amendments to 2092/91:**

*(Official Journal L 098 , 13/04/2007 P. 0003 – 0004)*

Commission Regulation (EC) No 394/2007 of 12 April 2007 amending Annex I to Council Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91 on organic production of agricultural products and indications referring thereto in agricultural products and foodstuffs. This amendment increased the allowance for 2<sup>nd</sup> year in-conversion feed to 50% for brought-in rations and to 80% for own-farm rations, until the end of 2008.

*(Official Journal L 181 , 11/07/2007 P. 0010 - 0011 )*

Commission Regulation (EC) No 807/2007 of 10 July 2007 amending Annex II to Council Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91 on organic production of agricultural products and indications referring thereto on agricultural products and foodstuffs. In Table III (Substances to be used in traps and/or dispensers) in point 1 of Part B (Products for plant protection) of Annex II to Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91, for the entry 'Metaldehyde', the date '31 March 2006' is replaced by '31 March 2008'.

### 3. Calendar/Links /Other news

#### 3.1 Calendar ``

**October 17, 2007:** "Fair Trade - a lever for change", conference organised by the Fair Trade Advocacy Office, Brussels  
(contact: [info@fairtrade-advocacy.org](mailto:info@fairtrade-advocacy.org))

**November 19-20, 2007:** Food in a Future Climate - Conference on Sustainable Food Systems, Norrköping, Sweden  
<http://www.cul.slu.se/english/conference/index.html>

**December 4-5:** IFOAM EU Group, European Organic Congress,  
<http://www.organic-congress-ifoameu.org/>

**April 17-18, 2008:** Colloque international, « Agriculture Biologique & Changement Climatique », Lempdes, France, [www.abiodoc.com](http://www.abiodoc.com)

**May 12-16, 2008:** GMO-Free Global Summit on Diversity during the Biosafety Protocol Meeting of Parties and the Convention on Biological Diversity, Bonn, Germany.  
<http://www.gmo-free-regions.org/planetdiversity.html>

#### 3.2 Links:

**Standing committee on Organic Farming-** Short report of the meetings of the Standing Committee on Organic Farming:

- 67<sup>th</sup> Meeting on [15/03/2007](#)
- 68<sup>th</sup> Meeting on [13/06/2007](#)

#### 3.3 Other news

**Truth about Organic** - A new book "The truth about organic farming" was published in spring 2007 by Alex Avery. The book attacks organic production claiming it is no better than conventional production.  
<http://www.thetruthaboutorganicfoods.org/key-references/>



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International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements – EU Regional Group

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>

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Please send any comments on the newsletter to [info@ifoam-eu.org](mailto:info@ifoam-eu.org). For further information contact your national board member or the office in Brussels.

Editor IFOAM EU Group Newsletter:  
Marco Schlüter  
Rue Commerce 124, 1000 Brussels, Belgium  
Phone: + 32-2-280 12 23  
Fax: +32-2-7357381