

Dear members and friends,

I hope it is still early enough in 2008 to wish you a successful and enjoyable organic New Year!

And it will be another eventful one for the European organic sector.

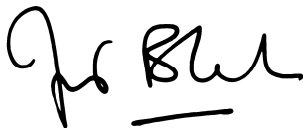
The European Commission has published its draft of the implementing rules that will complete the new organic regulation. The IFOAM EU Group board, the member states and many of you are already working intensively on this. Yet again, it falls to us to influence it in the direction of delivering what the organic sector needs, both to develop on a sound footing and to maintain the trust of consumers.

The Commission has also approved the new EU logo. Full marks to them for doing this quickly, as the sector had requested. But low marks for the design, which does not work in all languages - one of the key attributes identified as necessary.

The year will also see Europe hosting IFOAM's Organic World Congress - in Italy in June. This is always a great event, and with Italian hospitality, it is not to be missed! The IFOAM EU Group will be there in force.

But before then, we have Biofach later this month, another important gathering of the organic movement. I hope to meet many of you at the various events the IFOAM EU Group will be organising, details of which you can find in this newsletter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Francis Blake". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Francis Blake
President



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1. Activities of the IFOAM EU Group

1.1 IFOAM EU Group at Biofach'08

The IFOAM EU Group will participate in full force at this year's BioFach World Organic Trade Fair in Nuremberg, February 21-24. In turns, the Group will be permanently available to meet you at the IFOAM booth 330 in Hall 1 (there you will find the IFOAM EU Group information corner) throughout the fair. You can also meet us at various presentations and events.

When and where to meet the IFOAM EU Group:

During the entire fair:

- IFOAM booth, Hall 1, Stand 330, permanently a representative from the IFOAM EU Group

Thursday, February 21st

- 14-16 pm, St. Petersburg room E: "European Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming". News and current status of implementation of the EU Action Plan, policy analysis, information about the ORGAP project, implemented by the IFOAM EU. You can meet at this event Victor Gonzalvez.

Friday, February 22nd:

- 10-12 am, Wine hall (4): the workshop "European rules for organic wine – how to ensure harmonisation and regional flexibility" will present the research project ORWINE. Here you can meet Lena Wietheger, Project Coordinator at the Brussels office of the Group.
- 12-13 pm, Oslo room E: "IFOAM EU Group – working for organic food and farming in Europe". The Director of IFOAM EU, Marco Schlüter, will deliver a presentation about the current activities of the organisation and will report on hot topics in Brussels. Other members of the Group might also be present.
- 15-17 pm, St. Petersburg room E: "Revision of the European Organic Regulation – the Implementing Rules" with European Commission representatives from DG Agriculture (Jean Francois Hulot, head of unit Organic Farming) and DG Fish (Richard Bates), Alex Beck from the German processors (AÖL) and the IFOAM EU president Francis Blake as well as Diane Bowen from the head office of IFOAM.
- 16-18 pm, room Oslo: IFOAM information bazaar - meet the IFOAM EU Group Vice President Alessandro Triantafyllidis and Lena Wietheger, Project Coordinator.

Saturday, February 23rd:

- 13-14 pm, Riga room E: "A research vision for organic food and farming 2025", Anamarija Slabe (EEB, Vice President) and Marco Schlüter (IFOAM EU, Director) will present the project of the organic research platform and a vision document for organic research 2025.

Please, also find an overview of the activities of IFOAM, including the IFOAM Trade Symposium on February 20th, in the following link – [IFOAM head office key events](#).

1.2 The new Organic Regulation – Implementing Rules

On January 10th 2008 the European Commission issued a working document, a 'non-paper' on the Implementing Rules of the [new organic regulation](#) (Council Regulation 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products with regard to organic production, labelling and control), which will replace, as of January 2009, the current Regulation 2092/91.

The document is a step further since the first consultation among stakeholders in the autumn months of 2007. The IFOAM EU Group has been working intensely on the documents and issued several position papers and letters to the Commission – the latest in January 2008 on the issues of [organic poultry production](#) and [import rules](#). The IFOAM EU Group is following the process closely and will hand over its final assessment to the Commission's working paper and have a meeting with the responsible Organic Unit of the Commission at the beginning of March. The European Commission plans to present a new working paper in April and come to a final agreement with the standing committee on organic farming in May.

Organic Aquaculture – The new organic regulation 834/2007 foresees also the inclusion of new areas such as aquaculture and wine. The European Commission who works currently on the new rules seeks to adapt the respective implementing rules in autumn this year. DG Fish of the European Commission held its second expert meeting on organic aquaculture in January where also the IFOAM EU group took part and gave initial reactions. The [initial response](#) regarding the Implementing Rules on organic aquaculture has to be seen as first reaction namely. More elaborated recommendations are currently worked out by the new established IFOAM EU Group's aquaculture experts group.

Revision info page - For documents and communications related to the revision of the organic regulation, please visit the [Revision Info page](#) of the IFOAM EU Group.

1.3 Research

* **Research Technology Platform** – consultation on Vision Paper for Organic Research 2025. The IFOAM EU Group and ISOFAR initiated a process for drawing up a vision for innovative research activities for organic agriculture and food systems. A Vision Camp in France was the basis for the first draft of the Vision Paper. After an internal consultation round of the expert group, the paper was subject of a two-month public consultation, including a discussion at the IFOAM EU Organic Congress in Brussels, December 2007. The current re-drafted version of the [research vision](#) (not yet published, the provided link leads to the previous draft of the Vision) is a result of the received input and will be open for an electronic consultation which will start end of February and will end at 31 March 2007. The final vision will be approved in April.

* **ORGAP news:** ORGAPET – the Organic Action Plan Evaluation Toolbox whose development has been the central part of the ORGAP project - will be finalised at the end of February 2008. After this it will be forwarded to FiBL for general editing of the web version in March and April 2008.

ORGAPET is a collection of different evaluation tools, including participative techniques, quantitative assessments and methods to identify relevant indicators, which could be used selectively for the assessment of national or EU action plans. It has been developed as an electronic toolbox for use on-line or from a CD-ROM and incorporates key documents and hyperlinks between the different elements. Information on the toolbox and its application will be provided during BioFach as part of the session on the European Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming (Feb 21st, 2-4 p.m. St. Petersburg Room - CCN Ost). <http://www.orgap.org>

* **ORWINE workshop and pavilion at Biofach:** On Friday, February 22, the workshop "European rules for organic wine – how to ensure harmonisation and regional flexibility" will take place from 10 to 12 am in the wine hall. The workshop, which will be moderated by Danièle Tissot from DG Research of the Commission, is an opportunity to obtain information on the policy oriented research project ORWINE. The project's overall objective is to provide a scientific background for the development of EU legislative framework and code of best practices for organic wine production and labelling. ORWINE will also be represented throughout the BioFach with a booth: Wine Hall 4A, island 220. You can find further information on ORWINE and its activities during BioFach at www.orwine.org.

1.4 IFOAM EU Group/office in Brussels & internal structure

The office is currently working with 3 permanent and 3 temporary members of the staff after the leave in the beginning of February of Guillaume Coutelet (trainee) who is back to France to finish his university studies. IFOAM EU Group would like to thank him for his help especially during the European Organic Congress, organised by the Brussels office of the Group in December

2007 (you can still inform yourself about the event through the [congress website](#) where you will find its programme and most of the delivered speeches and presentations).

The IFOAM EU Group is currently in the process of selection of a Research Platform Coordinator who will be based in the Brussels office.

2. The 16th IFOAM Organic World Congress to be held in Modena

The registration for the 16th IFOAM Organic World congress opens on 20th of February. The congress will take place in Modena/Italy from 16th to 20th of June, 2008. Bookings can be made either online or by sending in the completed application form downloadable from the IFOAM website www.ifoam.org. The congress is expected to bring together about 2000 participants.

Many distinguished figures have already confirmed participation. In June, Modena will play host not just to the Indian Vandana Shiva and the Ethiopian scientist Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher, both winners of the Right Livelihood Award, but also to the Bolivian President Juan Evo Morales, former trade union leader of the „cocaleros“. The food and wine connoisseur Carlo Petrini, founder of the Slow Food movement and recently featured in the authoritative columns of The Guardian as „one of the 50 people who could save the planet“ will partake as well in this global event. Also the agro ecologist Miguel Altieri, from the University of Berkeley (California), the doctor and obstetrician Michel Odent, pioneer of natural childbirth, and the American Frances Moore Lappé, author of the book „Diet for a Small Planet“ will show presence - among many others.

For any further information, please log on to www.ifoam.org or www.modenabio2008.org (latter in Italian language).

3. Calendar/Links /Other news

3.1 Calendar

Time (2008)	Event
February 18-20	13th International Conference on Cultivation Technique and Phytopathological Problems in Organic Fruit-Growing, Weinsberg/Germany http://www.ecofruit.net <i>The IFOAM EU Group is patron of this event.</i>
February 21 - 24	BioFach, Nuremberg/Germany http://www.biofach.de/de

March 5	International Conference on Organic Food in Catering, part of SALIMA 2008 International Food Fairs, Brno, Czech Republic, www.salima.eu
March 27	Organic Business in the CEE - International Conference on Organic Food Marketing and Sales, Prague/Czech Republic http://www.organic-europe.net/events/2008-03-27-biosummit.doc
April 10-12	International conference on the organic sector development in Eastern European and Central Asian countries, Kyiv/Ukraine http://www.organic-services.com/deutsch/news/index_news_dt.htm
April 17-18	International scientific conference "Organic agriculture and climate change: the contribution of organic agriculture", Lempdes/France www.abiodoc.com , www.enitac.fr
May 12-16	Planet Diversity – World Congress on the Future of Food and Agriculture, Bonn/Germany http://www.planet-diversity.org
May 26-27	Organic Marketing Forum 2008, Warsaw/Poland http://www.organic-marketing-forum.org/index.php?lang=english
June 16-20	The 16th IFOAM Organic World Congress, Modena/Italy http://www.ifoam.org/events/ifoam_conferences/owc/Organic_World_Congress.html
September 3-5	Bioacademy 2008 – 8 th European Summer Academy on Organic Farming, Lednice/Czech Republic http://www.pro-bio.cz/bioak/info.php?lan=eng <i>Under the patronage of the IFOAM EU Group.</i>

3.2 Links:

* **Standing committee on Organic Farming** – latest reports from the meetings of the Standing Committee on Organic Farming:

- 71st meeting on [16-17/01/2008](http://www.ifoam.org/events/ifoam_conferences/owc/Organic_World_Congress.html)
- 70th meeting on [27/11/2007](http://www.ifoam.org/events/ifoam_conferences/owc/Organic_World_Congress.html)
- 69th meeting on [16/10/2007](http://www.ifoam.org/events/ifoam_conferences/owc/Organic_World_Congress.html)

* **Report of the Conference „Perspectives for Food 2030”** (April 17-18, 2007, Brussels) is now available on the conference website:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/conferences/2007/food2030/report_en.htm

3.3 Other news

* **Organic Marketing Forum:** For a 3rd time in a row EkoConnect organises an “Organic Marketing Forum” with the intention to bring together organic traders, processors, producers and other food experts from different parts of Europe. This year the Forum will take place on 26th and 27th of May at the EXPO21 exhibition centre (www.expo21.pl) in Warsaw, Poland, and is expected to attract about 300 participants. As in previous years, its main focus will be on: establishing and supporting of local organic markets in Central and Eastern European countries as well as on building bridges between the Eastern and Western parts of Europe.

For more information, please visit <http://www.organic-marketing-forum.org>

* **EFSA launched for public consultation its [draft opinion on animal cloning](#)** (deadline for submitting your opinion is 25 of February). The draft opinion includes acknowledgment that “death and disease” among clones are “significantly higher” and that “the available data for risk assessment are limited”, but states that nevertheless “it is very unlikely that any difference exists in terms of food safety between food products originating from clones and their progeny compared with those derived from conventionally bred animals”.

* **Internal commission report questions the benefits of biofuel.** The costs of the future EU biofuels policy could “almost certainly outweigh the benefits” with no guarantee that there is a net reduction in overall EU Greenhouse Gas Emissions. That is the main conclusion of a leaked internal report by the Commission’s Joint Research Council (JRC), according to AFRAFACTS. Coming ahead of the Commission’s proposals to implement the compulsory targets of achieving 10% use of biofuels in overall transport fuel by 2020, the report has prompted environmental NGOs to call for the 10% biofuels target to be abandoned.

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>



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International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements – EU Regional Group

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