



Working for organic farming in Europe

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International Federation of
Organic Agriculture Movements –
EU Regional Group

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Mr. Juha Korkeaoja
Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
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Finland

Dear Minister

Commission proposal for a revision of Regulation 2092/91

I am writing to express the grave concern of the European organic sector at the proposed timetable to approve the revision of Regulation 2092/91 before the end of this year.

We understand your Presidency's wish to progress this to completion and we applaud your support for organic farming that underlies this. However, we have deep reservations about the quality of the regulation that will result if you pursue this timetable. Your predecessor, the Austrian Presidency, agreed that "quality is more important than speed"; we urge you to adopt the same principle.

As you know from our meeting on 22nd September, we have offered our cooperation in achieving a practical, widely supported and successful revised 'organic' regulation. We have proposed detailed amendments to substantially improve the Austrian/Finnish 'compromise text', but in the subsequent drafts that have emerged, we see almost nothing of these.

We wish to emphasise that these proposals are the result of extensive consultation within the IFOAM EU Group. They represent the agreed stance of the 330 member organisations in the EU, EFTA and accession countries – in other words, the vast majority of the European organic sector. These are the ones who will have to live with and implement this regulation. It seems extraordinary, and is potentially disastrous, that their views are not being properly taken into account.

The latest drafts of some articles include a number of completely new proposals, and further, a whole new draft is expected shortly. Surely, it cannot be right, and it is certainly not good governance, to push these through at the level of the Special Committee on Agriculture and on to the Council before proper consultation with stakeholders and discussion at the technical level have taken place. With this approach, the sector will simply become the victim of a political deal.

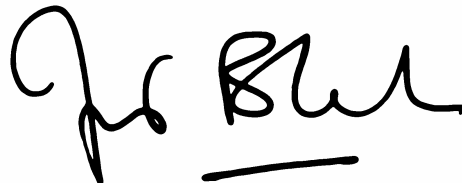
This is a complex and (still) controversial regulation proposal. Whilst we recognise that there have been a number of minor improvements, the key issues at the heart of the organic sector's concerns still remain. We are deeply worried by these and the fact that they are still there. We are aware of similar concerns amongst member states.

We urge you to give whatever time it takes to:

- a) formally consult with stakeholders and take the views of the sector properly into account; and
- b) complete the necessary discussions at the technical level before attempting to reach political agreement.

We again offer our input and assistance in all ways that could be helpful to achieve what we all want for this proposed new regulation.

Yours sincerely



Francis Blake
President

cc Mrs Mariann Fischer Boel, Commissioner for Agriculture
EU Ministers of Agriculture
European Parliament Agriculture and Environmental
Committees
Standing Committee on Organic Farming