

## ***New European organic regulation approved***

**Brussels (12/06/2007)** – The IFOAM EU Group (1) noted that today the European Council approved the revised new regulation for organic food and farming (2). This concludes the first stage in the process of replacing Council Regulation 2092/91 (3), which was started 18 months ago with the publication of the Commission's draft proposals (4). The focus will now move to the Implementing Rules, which will be critical to the success, or otherwise, of this new regulation.

"We and others have managed to secure some considerable improvements compared to the original proposal, which we welcome", said Francis Blake, IFOAM EU Group President. "In particular, these include:

- clearer and more appropriate objectives and principles (articles 3 – 6)
- inclusion of rules for yeast and seaweed, both previously excluded
- deletion of unnecessary restrictions on label and advertising claims (article 20)
- deletion of the curbs on private standards (article 24) – recognising the important role they play in innovation and promotion and in upholding consumer trust.

"However, we regret that the Council missed the opportunity of addressing other major concerns which would have enabled fuller support for this regulation", he continued. "Worst of these are the inadequate exclusion of GM contamination (article 7aa), a compulsory EU logo (article 18), and the lack of any formal means for the organic agriculture movement to be involved in making decisions about its own regulation. Another concern is the restriction on subsidiarity (right to have stricter national standards – article 28)."

Approval of this regulation now allows the second stage to begin: finalising the Implementing Rules. This will involve transferring the annexes from Regulation 2092/91, together with defining other details not covered by the new Regulation.

Francis Blake commented, "much will now depend on the Implementing Rules, in particular to ensure the criteria for evaluating inputs (article 11) and for allowing flexibility (article 16) are sufficiently restrictive. It is vital that the Implementing Rules are adequate both to protect the integrity of organic food and farming, and to ensure a vibrant and successful organic sector."

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## Press Release

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements – EU Regional Group

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### Notes

- (1) The IFOAM EU Group represents the 330 member organisations of IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) in the EU, and including EFTA and Accession countries. Member organisations include: consumer, farmer and processor associations; research, education and advisory organisations; certification bodies and commercial organic companies.
- (2) The Regulation on Organic Production and Labelling of Organic Products was approved by the Council, under the German Presidency, on 12/06/2007. It is due to come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009.
- (3) Regulation 2092/91 is now over 15 years old and has been subject to over 30 amending regulations.
- (4) The Commission's proposal for a Council Regulation on Organic Production and Labelling of Organic Products was published on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2005. It followed from the European Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming, published on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2004. The aim was to introduce a simpler and more logical structure, address the inconsistencies and derogations that have built up in regulation 2092/91, add wine and aquaculture to its scope, and bring it into line with other EU and international legislation.