

## **IFOAM EU Group publishes proposal for Revision of Organic EU Regulation**

**Brussels, 20 October 2005** - The IFOAM EU Group today officially published its position paper on the revision of the organic regulation, EC Regulation 2092/91 (1). The Group proposes a thorough overhaul of the regulation, starting from basic principles which lead to certifiable standards. Numerous suggestions are made for improvements.

This Regulation has been of great importance to the growth of the organic sector. Therefore in its paper the IFOAM EU Group warmly welcomes the Commission's initiative to revise the "organic Regulation". It is now time to ensure the standards better reflect the many changes of the past and can cope with the dynamics and challenges of the future.

A major concern of the Group is that not enough time has been given by the European Commission to effectively involve stakeholders in this important step. "We welcome this review, which was anticipated in the Organic Action Plan", said Francis Blake, president of the Group. "As the revision has the potential to be the most significant development for the European organic sector since the regulation came into force in 1991, we urge that a fast decision-making process must not be at the expense of consultation with the organic movement and other stakeholders".

Taking the time for proper consultation with all stakeholders would fully release the energy of a highly motivated sector in re-defining its long-term goals. The outcome could be ambitious, inspiring and far more practical rules which the sector would be eager to abide by. The IFOAM EU Group, as well as many member states, are therefore urging the Commission to invest the proper time and energy needed to come to a satisfactory result.

"Nevertheless, the Group offers its full support and co-operation to the process. Our common aim is to ensure the best for the future of organic farming in Europe", added Sabine Eigenschink, chair of the IFOAM EU Regulation committee. "Therefore in our paper we address fundamental issues such as defining the principles of organic agriculture, harmonising inspection systems across the EU and safeguarding the sector from GMOs. These issues can and should now be tackled!"

The European Commission aims to present a proposal for the Revision of the organic regulation to the Council by end of the year. The Council will deal with the Commission proposal under the coming Austrian presidency.

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The full comments of the IFOAM EU group, including an executive summary, can be downloaded from:

[http://www.ifoam.org/about\\_ifoam/around\\_world/eu\\_group/pdfs/IFOAMEUpositionpaperRevision.pdf](http://www.ifoam.org/about_ifoam/around_world/eu_group/pdfs/IFOAMEUpositionpaperRevision.pdf)

(1) The EC Regulation 2092/91 is the legal framework defining the rules for organic farming in Europe. Currently the Commission is implementing a review of the Regulation, as was proposed in the European Action plan for organic food and farming.