

Labelling of Seed Mixtures

24th October 2007

Background

Article 6 of Regulation 2092/91 specifies rules for the organic production of seeds. However, seeds may also be sold in mixtures of different species, for example for sowing pasture, which might include different species of grasses, together with clover and herbs.

Whilst the seeds of some of these species are becoming available in organic form, others are not. This raises the question of how to describe such mixtures on their labels in a manner that:

- both ensures clear labelling
- and provides an incentive to increase the organic proportion.

To achieve this, the IFOAM EU Group suggest a step-by-step procedure

Minimum requirements for the labelling of pre-packed seed mixtures

- Until 31st December 2013, mixtures containing a minimum of 70 % by weight of organic seeds can be labelled as “ORGANIC SEED MIXTURES”.
- From 1st January 2014, the limit will be 95 %.
- Appropriate varieties available on the Database have to be used in these mixtures.
- The total percentage by weight of organic seeds in the mixture has to be indicated in the ingredients list.
- Mixtures containing less than these percentages of organic seeds (95 % from 2014, 70% before 2014) must be labelled as “SEED MIXTURE CONTAINING X % (by weight) ORGANIC SEEDS”.
- In both cases: the organic varieties have to be indicated in the ingredients list.

Other important provisions

- The “ORGANIC SEED MIXTURES” must be listed in the Database.
- If the farmer does not use such a seed mixture, he has to apply for a derogation (following the rules laid down in Regulation 1452/2003). This derogation is only valid for the current season (see 1452/2003 A5(a))
- Seeds that are produced as in-conversion cannot be used as part of the organic percentage in a mixture.
- If ORGANIC SEED MIXTURES are not used up in one season, it is acceptable to use them in the next season.