

Rules of procedure of the IFOAM Farmers Group

Name

IFOAM Farmers Group (IFG)

Nature of the group

The IFOAM Farmers Group is an organ within IFOAM, organising farmers' and farm-workers' organisations.

Objective

The purpose of the IFOAM Farmers Group is

- to pursue IFOAM's objectives among organic farmers and farm-workers
- to represent its affiliates within IFOAM
- to represent its affiliates to the outside
- to give farmers a voice in IFOAM
- to build bridges between farmers from north to south and from east to west

Membership

There are two categories of affiliation with the group:

- Member (with voting right) and
- associate (without voting right).

The basis for which category of affiliation is appropriate is the membership status in IFOAM.

The criteria for membership is

- membership in IFOAM
- farmers' or farm workers' organisations

The Farmers Group Steering Committee decides upon admission of members and associates. It may expel affiliates that act against the Federation's objectives or interests. The decisions may be appealed to IFOAM.

The IFG meetings and web-site will be open to non-members. These non-members will have no voting right.

Organs

The official organs of the Farmers Group are the General Assembly and the Farmers Group Steering Committee (StC). A convenor has been appointed to co-ordinate the group. The work is mainly done through e-mail.

General Assembly

A General Assembly of the Farmers Group shall be held in connection to the IFOAM Organic World Congress. It is announced in writing by the Steering Committee three months in advance.

The General Assembly elects a Chair of the GA. The General Assembly votes by simple majority with at least 20% of the members represented. Voting is open or by secret ballot, if so requested by one member. Members have one vote. Associate members cannot vote. Votes by written proxy are permitted, but restricted to a total of five votes per person.

Decisions of the General Assembly are recorded in Minutes, which are signed by the Chair and distributed to all IFG affiliates and to IFOAM.

On the written request of 25 % of the members or by IFOAM an extraordinary General Assembly shall be called.

Election of the Convenor and Steering Committee

The following officers will be elected by simple majority vote at each General Assembly

- Convenor
- Steering Committee consisting of appr. 10 members

Contact point

The Convenor shall be the point of contact with IFOAM, and shall be responsible for communication the affiliates

The Steering Committee (StC)

The Farmers Group Steering Committee decides all issues not yet determined by the General Assembly. The Farmers Group Steering Committee has to establish rules of procedure for itself. The Farmers Group Steering Committee takes decisions by e-mail following procedures fixed by the Committee.

The StC will encourage work on a number of themes chosen by the Farmers Group GA and organised in thematic working groups by the StC. Each thematic working group shall have a co-ordinator from the StC. In the thematic groups needs and ideas can be processed into action plans and concrete projects. Electronic mailing lists will be used. The co-ordinators of the thematic groups invite FG affiliates to be active in the groups. They also invite those who work closely with farmers and others who want to contribute their expertise to enhance farmers' perspectives.

Finances

No membership fees.

Communication with IFOAM

All relevant decision shall be communicated to IFOAM in English.

Amendments, Modifications

The Farmers Group Steering Committee may unanimously pass provisional amendments of these rules that remain in force until the relative decision is taken by the next General Assembly. Any such amendments have to be made known to all members at least three months before they are implemented. Any modification of the ruled proposed by the Farmers Group Steering Committee should be sent to the members not less than two months before the next General Assembly.

Any amendments to the rules of procedure must be approved by the IFOAM World Board before they enter into force.

Termination

When the IFOAM Farmers Group is terminated its remaining assets shall be transferred to IFOAM.

Approved in principle by the WB 02-11, Delhi, India