

**Bonn 14<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

**Invitation to comment on 2<sup>nd</sup> Revision Draft of the IFOAM Benchmark for Standards**

Dear IFOAM Members and other Stakeholders,

The IFOAM Standards Committee has reviewed comments received on the first draft of the IFOAM Benchmark for Standards, and has prepared a second draft on which comments are now invited.

In addition to considering comments, the Standards Committee took into account the scope of the task assigned to it within the context of the revision of IFOAM's Organic Guarantee System. The task is to prepare a standard for standards-setting, and a tool for determining equivalency among many organic standards.

The second draft is changed from the first draft in the following respects:

- Where possible, and within the scope of the document's purpose, the requirements sections were made more specific, although not prescriptive and quantitative. Vague terms were replaced.
- Subsections in Chapters on "principles applied" and "objectives" were rewritten so that they are at consistent and distinct levels, and in consistent language. The "principles applied" are now short declarative statements that are more closely related to the IFOAM Principles of Organic Agriculture and applied to the relevant topic of the Chapter.
- Objectives and requirements are more closely related. The SC's intent is that all objectives have corresponding requirements, and vice-versa. The introduction now clearly explains that the implementation of requirements in organic standards based on the IFOAM Benchmark must fulfill the objectives.
- Subsections with "mandatory practices" from the first draft have been integrated into the main requirements. They no longer stand alone.
- Prohibited operator practices are retained in places where the SC felt that an emphasis or clarification on a specific operator activity is important.
- In most cases, requirements that do not appear in the current IFOAM Basic Standards were deleted. Exceptions are in Chapter 2 where some new requirements on biodiversity are retained.
- The whole document was edited for consistent language and style according to guidelines prepared for the second draft.
- Section C references the IFOAM Indicative List of Substances for Use in Organic Production and Processing, and the electronic version of the draft contains a link to the List.

**Instructions for Making Comments**

The second revision draft can be downloaded here:

[http://www.ifoam.org/about\\_ifoam/standards/OGS\\_Revision/20071013\\_IBS\\_Revision\\_Draft\\_2.doc](http://www.ifoam.org/about_ifoam/standards/OGS_Revision/20071013_IBS_Revision_Draft_2.doc)

**Comments are due by the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2007.** Send your comments to Diane Bowen at: [d.bowen@ifoam.org](mailto:d.bowen@ifoam.org).



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When making specific suggestions for language changes or additions, please submit them in “tracked changes,” an option that you find under the Tools menu of Microsoft Word or else provide clear and specific language changes that you are requesting.

Submit your general and specific comments in a separate document, which can be either the IBS draft itself or a new document. Do not use email text for your comments. Be sure to identify yourself and your affiliation. All comments will be posted on the IFOAM website.

After evaluating the comments, the Standards Committee will prepare a third draft on which IFOAM members will be invited to make motions. The process leads towards a decision on the final draft by IFOAM members, which is currently scheduled for late summer 2008.

**World Board and Standards Committee Responses to Comments on 1<sup>st</sup> Revision Draft**

The World Board and Standards Committee responses to comments on the 1<sup>st</sup> Revision Draft can be downloaded here:

[http://www.ifoam.org/about\\_ifoam/standards/OGS\\_Revision/20071013\\_SC+WB\\_Resp\\_Rev\\_Draft\\_1.pdf](http://www.ifoam.org/about_ifoam/standards/OGS_Revision/20071013_SC+WB_Resp_Rev_Draft_1.pdf)

Best regards,  
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