



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE MOVEMENTS
FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES MOUVEMENTS D'AGRICULTURE BIOLOGIQUE
FEDERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE MOVIMIENTOS DE AGRICULTURA BIOLÓGICA
INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG BIOLOGISCHER LANDBAUBEWEGUNGEN

IFOAM Organic Trade Forum

22 February 2005

Background

The main mission of IFOAM Organic Trade Forum (OTF) is to organise traders of organic products – to create an IFOAM business network. OTF initiatives are;

- develop organic trade
- improve business to business communication
- encourage ethical business practices
- attract more member partners to IFOAM by developing trade member benefits within IFOAM
- establish a forum for further discussions

There are very few organic companies that are IFOAM members today. As representatives for the business members in IFOAM, we can see that there is an urgent need for a significant **membership drive**.

We believe that the OTF can be an important resource when creating many of the member benefits. OTF can be the contact area between IFOAM membership and the companies. IFOAM can then develop ideas like closer cooperation with BioFach so exhibitors that are members/associated members in IFOAM get discount, provide general and up to date information to traders, build the worldwide network, recruit good ambassadors among company-leaders, etc.

We look forward to strengthening the great work of IFOAM by partnering and collaborating with the organic business community through OTF. The organic business is well organised – regionally, in sectors, ideologically etc – but we also need a greater commitment and cooperation on the international level.

Our mission is to strengthen the organic trade and by that accomplish an increase in organic farming and organic production methods. From both the organic industry and from the consumer perspective there is a strong link between organic production and fair trade concepts.

To encourage global sustainability through promoting and protecting the growth of diverse organic production and trade with commitment in social justice as an integral part of organic production and trade. IFOAM basic standards are developed by IFOAM members in over 100 countries and the standards are applied worldwide. The IFOAM guarantee system is an established concept offering an international set of standards /inspection /certification /accreditation.

A specific example how to create a more business oriented environment within IFOAM we consider the Organic company leaders discuss a new Code of Ethics:

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Code of Ethics for IFOAM business members

Core Values

As 'business' members of IFOAM we

- Promote organic trade
- Recognize the need for organic agriculture and organic trade to be both economically viable and ecologically sound
- Recognize the interdependence of all parts of the organic community
- Understand that organic farms and farmers are the foundation of the organic industry
- Also understand the situation for and support conventional actors that will convert parts or whole their business into organics
- Seek out and use whole system approaches to agricultural and business practices
- Support the consumers right to knowledge and choice in the marketplace

Organic trade

As 'business' members of the IFOAM, we have responsibilities to our industry, customers, people and association.

Responsibility to our Industry

We are committed to the continued growth of the organic industry.

- Through cooperation within and outside of IFOAM, we seek to establish credibility for the organic industry.
- When we produce products labelled as organic.
- We will develop the market for certified organic foods and goods.
- We work to promote sustainable organic agricultural systems through: Stewardship of natural resources and development, maintenance and promotion of healthy agricultural soil and biologically sound, ecologically safe and agronomical responsible methods of plant and animal care.
- Organic trade is a kind of positive globalisation, with the main idea that trade brings people together and that the products gives opportunities for a learning process about food production, health, human rights beside the knowledge about the food item itself like taste, nutrition etc.

Responsibility to our Customers

We are committed to conducting all of our dealings with customers with integrity, in a respectful and honest way.

- We will ensure that all of our products are labelled truthfully and accurately.
- We will use accurate statements and claims in marketing our products and/or services.
- We will find ways to build relations and meeting places between producers and consumers.

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Responsibility to our People

We are committed to promoting and upholding the highest standards of respect and fairness for our employees and co-workers and for providers in every link of the trade chain.

- We uphold local, regional and national laws and regulations.
- We encourage the growth of the people in our organizations, providing them with appropriate educational opportunities, capacity building and promotion whenever possible.
- We consider in our daily business human rights; as non discrimination, adequate wages, gender rights, right to employment etc.
- We promote and uphold respect and fairness for our employees, co-workers and suppliers in every link of trade chain

Responsibility to IFOAM and OTF

We support and actively commit to maintaining the integrity of organic agricultural production.

- As business members of the IFOAM, we recognize the value and importance of acting ethically.
- As part of our commitment to building and maintaining the ethical status of the organization, we understand that we are expected to report allegations of ethical misconduct to appropriate actor, and that as part of our commitment to build a strong ethical culture, we agree to assist in any investigation of ethical misconduct.
- We promote the positive resolution of disputes through mediation and informal reconciliation procedures as a first step in any consideration of allegations of unethical activity.

Furthermore we indicate our awareness, understanding and support of this Code of Ethics by returning the appropriately endorsed form.

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