

First questionnaire for Consultative Group on rewriting the Principles of Organic Agriculture

Reaction ultimately April 20th 2004

IFOAM's mission is leading, uniting and assisting the organic movement in its full diversity.

Our goal is the worldwide adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound systems that are based on the Principles of Organic Agriculture.

1. Currently IFOAM has principal aims (see Annex). What do you see as the principles behind these aims? ¹

What do you see as the most important purpose of having a set of Principles?

2. What kind of work are the principles doing in the organic movement?

How can the principles accommodate the diversity of the organic movement?

What would be the role of the principles outside the organic movements?

What principles are rightfully principles of Organic Agriculture (as being distinct from principles for a better world)?

3. What does this (your answers to the former questions) require with respect to the form and number of principles?

Do you have clear, specific and appropriate ideas for drafting the principles?

How can we best establish a set of principles of organic agriculture?

4. Do you have any visualization / materialization (e.g. a photo, art, a poem) that expresses for you the principles of organic agriculture? You are invited to share them with the Task Force! Could you articulate in one sentence the relationship of this photo, painting etc. with the principles of organic agriculture?

NB: please be aware that any materials sent to us will not be returned. They will be used by the Task Force and may be eventually displayed during the General Assembly 2005.

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Principle means a basic truth

Principal means the same thing as "main."

Examples of usage:

Her textbook is called "The principles of physics,"

Her principal means of financial support for her university studies were from an inheritance from her grandmother. Page 1 of 2

UNITING THE ORGANIC WORLD

Annex to questionnaire:

The principle Aims of Organic Production and Processing

Organic Production and Processing is based on a number of principles and ideas. All are important and this list does not seek to establish any priority of importance. The principles include:

- To produce sufficient quantities of high quality food, fiber and other products.
- To work compatibly with natural cycles and living systems through the soil, plants and animals in the entire production system.
- To recognize the wider social and ecological impact of and within the organic production and processing system.
- To maintain and increase long-term fertility and biological activity of soils using locally adapted cultural, biological and mechanical methods as opposed to reliance on inputs.
- To maintain and encourage agricultural and natural biodiversity on the farm and surrounds through the use of sustainable production systems and the protection of plant and wildlife habitats.
- To maintain and conserve genetic diversity through attention to on-farm management of genetic resources.
- To promote the responsible use and conservation of water and all life therein.
- To use, as far as possible, renewable resources in production and processing systems and avoid pollution and waste.
- To foster local and regional production and distribution.
- To create a harmonious balance between crop production and animal husbandry.
- To provide living conditions that allow animals to express the basic aspects of their innate behavior
- To utilize biodegradable, recyclable and recycled packaging materials.
- To provide everyone involved in organic farming and processing with a quality of life that satisfies their basic needs, within a safe, secure and healthy working environment.
- To support the establishment of an entire production, processing and distribution chain which is both socially just and ecologically responsible.
- To recognize the importance of, and protect and learn from, indigenous knowledge and traditional farming systems.