

PRESS RELEASE

ORGANIC MOVEMENT ASKS FOR HIGHER ENVIRONMENTAL AMBITION IN NEW CAP

BRUSSELS, 1 JUNE 2018 – IFOAM EU welcomes the European Commission’s proposal to reform the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for the period 2021 to 2027 but warns that it will fail to incentivise more farmers to deliver public goods if a clear share of the budget is not ringfenced for environmental action.

Jan Plagge, IFOAM EU President said: “A new delivery model based on results and adapted to national realities is a good idea on paper, but Member States will fail to deliver if the new CAP does not clearly prioritise a transition towards sustainable agriculture through ringfencing of money for ‘Eco-schemes’ and agri-environmental measures.”

He continued: “The next CAP should be more ambitious and move away from the logic of ‘income foregone’ towards truly rewarding farmers for the public goods that they provide. Today organic farming is playing a leading role in making European agriculture more sustainable. Many farmers are already delivering public goods such as improved soil and water quality or increased biodiversity in all European regions. With the right incentives and an adequate budget in the next CAP many more farmers could make an even larger contribution to the environment, climate and rural communities beyond 2020.

Thomas Fertl, IFOAM EU Board Member and sector representative for farming added: “The organic movement is concerned about the significant cuts foreseen in the Rural Development budget and that the disappearance of a specific measure on organic farming in Pillar II could be mis-interpreted as a de-prioritization of organic farming in many Member States, especially if the removal of these measures is not balanced by an adequately funded Eco-scheme for Member States to reward public goods delivery.”

The Commission proposes significant changes to the way the CAP supports farmers, notably by removing greening payments and proposing the establishment of ‘Eco-schemes’ by Member States, voluntary for farmers. This new scheme, together with the existing Rural Development funds, opens potential new possibilities to compensate farmers who choose to do more for the for the climate and environment. Nevertheless, concerns remain for the organic sector on the extent to which countries will use this new tool and on the impact that Rural Development budget cuts may have on environmental measures currently financed by it.

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IFOAM EU represents more than 190 member organisations in the EU-28, the EU accession countries and EFTA. Member organisations span the entire organic food chain and beyond: from farmers and processors organisations, retailers, certifiers, consultants, traders and researchers to environmental and consumer advocacy bodies