

PRESS RELEASE

IFOAM EU CALLS FOR A CLEAR EU FRAMEWORK FOR AN AMBITIOUS CAP REFORM

BRUSSELS, 20 MARCH 2018 – On Monday 19 March, Agriculture Ministers were unable to agree on common conclusions on the Commission communication on "The future of food and farming", an important milestone in the discussion on the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) reform for 2020. The disagreement on income support payments resulted in downgrading the communication from the usual Council conclusions to Presidency conclusions.

On the one hand, the Presidency conclusions acknowledged the importance of the CAP as a key tool to meet European and global objectives for environmental protection, climate action and socioeconomic development. On the other hand, Ministers requested to simplify the CAP throughout its objectives and planning, as well as to give ample flexibility to each Member State to choose its own priorities.

Jan Plagge, IFOAM EU, Vice-President stated that: "The new CAP has to move away from compensating farmers for forgone income, towards rewarding them for the delivery of essential public goods for all Europeans, such as clean water, more biodiversity and animal welfare.

The whole architecture of the CAP has to reward green performance and not just parts of it. Pillar I in particular needs to deliver results for the environment and "greening" should be replaced by a more ambitious eco-scheme that encourages all farmers to shift to more sustainable practices and that allows the development of highly sustainable agricultural models like organic farming."

Laurent Moinet, IFOAM EU, Chair of the IFOAM EU Farmers Group reiterated this message by adding that: "Giving countries some flexibility to implement the CAP is necessary, but this should not lead to fragmenting the farming system in Europe. Flexibility and simplification should not come at the expense of a common EU framework that sets clear, ambitious and measurable objectives. The CAP must remain a European policy that sets common objectives for the benefit of farmers, rural communities, consumers and the environment."

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For more information please contact:

Nicolas de la Vega, Policy Officer for Agriculture and CAP
+32 (0)2 483 46 83 08, nicolas.delavega@ifoam-eu.org
Eva Berckmans, Communications Coordinator
+32 (0)2 808 7991, eva.berckmans@ifoam-eu.org

IFOAM EU represents more than 190 member organizations in the EU-28, the EU accession countries and EFTA. Member organizations 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