



Working for organic farming in Europe

International Federation of
Organic Agriculture Movements –
EU Regional Group

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Letter on key amendments of the Marit Paulsen report on evaluation and assessment of the Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2006-2010 (COM(2006)0013 – 2009/2202(INI))

Dear Members of European Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development,

The IFOAM EU Groups welcomes the Marit Paulsen report which addresses both the evaluation and assessment of the Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2006-2010 (COM(2006)0013 – 2009/2202(INI)) and the discussion on animal welfare improvements in the EU. The organic agriculture movement as represented by IFOAM has always made animal welfare one of its concerns for a more sustainable agriculture and has been a pioneer in developing a world wide certification system for organic farming, which includes enhanced animal welfare standards.

This letter presents main concerns of the IFOAM EU Group in relation to the report and proposed amendments.

The Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare for 2011-2015

The IFOAM EU Group considers the development of a new Action Plan for the Protection and Welfare of Animals for 2011-2015 as key tool for robust improvement of animal welfare in the EU (being strongly **against Amendment 125**, deleting paragraph 8 and **in favour of Amendment 128**). Organic farming provides one model of enhanced standards for animal welfare with by now the only EU wide control and certification system in place (Regulation (EC) No 834/2007), and thus should be an important element of the coming European actions.

Animal welfare labelling

The IFOAM EU Group welcomes the discussion on European schemes on animal welfare labelling (being **against Amendments 164, 176 and 183** deleting paragraphs 12-14).

The IFOAM EU looks for further developments and further discussions on animal welfare labelling schemes. Within proposed amendments, the IFOAM EU Group would like to highlight:

- the importance of fitting animal welfare labelling among other various existing environmental, nutritional and climate labelling schemes within EU food labelling policies (**being in favour of Amendment 177**),
- the importance of consumer education and access of citizens to information on animal welfare should be the one of the key issues of EU animal welfare policy (**being in favour of Amendment 174**),
- the importance of posing the same animal welfare standards on imported products (**being in favour of Amendment 171**).

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The IFOAM EU Group is strongly **against Amendment 186**, as animal welfare labelling schemes should be based on information and scientific background and all claims related to animal welfare should be provable.

Animal welfare indicators

The IFOAM EU Group welcomes the development of animal welfare indicators and the developments of the Animal Welfare Quality Project, emphasizing the fact that more research is needed as the indicator-based approach that came out of the project is not yet enough scientifically justified, practical and comprehensive. Research should cover all farmed animal species and follow a more holistic approach towards the definition of animal welfare standards and animal welfare indicators (including the inputs' evaluation, the overall management of livestock systems, as well as the adaptation of breeds to the environment).

The IFOAM EU Group calls for a system of animal welfare indicators that is simple (**being in favour of Amendment 419**) and practically applicable but based on scientific findings (**being in favour of Amendment 421**). The IFOAM EU Group sees that Member States should enforce implementation of the EU policy on animal welfare and should work for the improvement of *'livestock farming technologies'*, thus **supporting Amendment 428**.

Impact of the animal welfare policies

Organic production system is a holistic approach that successfully delivers a high standard of animal welfare, other sustainability benefits and high food quality, thus the IFOAM EU Group **strongly opposes the inclusion of the Amendment 54** and welcomes further evaluation of the impact of the animal welfare policy in wider concept of the sustainability (**being in favour of Amendment 136**).

Other important issues

The IFOAM EU Group welcomes the future ban of poultry production in cages and supports its implementation and control (**being against Amendment 108** and **in favour of Amendment 113**).

The Organic sector also supports the regionalisation of animal slaughtering and the shortening of animal transport distances (**being in favour of Amendment 192**).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher Stopes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christopher Stopes
The IFOAM EU Group President