

PRESS RELEASE

Feeding the people: global agri-food system needs fundamental change

29 September 2015, EXPO 2015, Milan, Italy –Today, the [Action Network: Organic Can Feed The Planet](#) published a manifesto and released a declaration, affirming organic as the food and farming system best suited to meet the major challenges facing us. The organic movement has joined together to contribute to the theme of this year's EXPO in Milan – feeding the planet – and IFOAM EU has published a report, [Feeding the People: Agroecology for Nourishing the World and transforming the Agri-Food System](#).

“The question of feeding the planet is often and unfortunately approached from the wrong angle. Focussing entirely on intensifying production is misguided and merely props up collective dependency on the very industrial agri-food production and consumption systems that do not meet the needs of people whilst destroying the environment,” said IFOAM EU President Christopher Stopes. He continued “Organic food and farming and agroecology have a holistic, system-wide approach to food and farming. They are uniquely placed to address the complex and interlinked global challenges we currently face including food insecurity and obesity, climate change, unfair working and trade conditions, soil degradation, loss of biodiversity, poor animal welfare, deforestation and loss of agricultural land, to name but a few.”

“There is an urgent need for a transformation of the existing agro-food systems to sustainable agroecological systems and scientific investigation is increasingly showing that a system-wide change is needed,” continued Angelika Hilbeck, a senior scientist at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology's Institute of Integrative Biology and co-editor of *Feeding the People*. “Agroecology is an innovative form of food production that offers huge potential, not only to provide better food but also to remedy the environmental destruction that now threatens human societies. Therefore, we are calling for a billion-euro EU flagship research programme on agroecology and the transformation of the current agro-food system.”

Background information

At both national and international levels, there is an absence of broad-based political support, regulatory frameworks and appropriate economic incentives – or they are just in their infancy. In *Feeding the People*, editors Angelika Hilbeck and Bernadette Oehen bring together a number of well-known experts to share their visions of how agriculture can be transformed from its current, destructive form, to one that will help reverse the environmental damage done by industrial agriculture, and one which can feed the global population.

[Organic Can Feed The Planet Action network](#)

[Feeding the People: Agroecology for Nourishing the World and transforming the Agri-Food System](#)

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IFOAM EU represents more than 160 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.