

PRESS RELEASE

Ministers display a diversity of opinions on organic

Brussels, Belgium, 16 March 2015 – At today's meeting of the AGRIFISH Council, the diversity of opinions among EU ministers was clear. While acknowledging the progress made under the Latvian Presidency, most ministers also cited areas that would require deeper analysis and additional work.

"Many IFOAM EU suggestions, such as putting controls back into the organic regulation, have been taken up and the Latvian Presidency has done a good job moving things forward. However, with the integrity of the EU organic standard and the livelihoods of thousands of organic producers at stake, sufficient time must be spent analysing the practical impact any new legislation would have," says IFOAM EU President Christopher Stopes.

"There is still a diversity of opinions on many topics, including thresholds and the frequency of controls," says Marco Schlüter, Director of IFOAM EU. "Once political decisions are reached, the technical details must be formulated and their potential impact must be thoroughly analysed to avoid unforeseen, adverse effects. Even though things are moving in the right direction, there is still much to be done before a regulatory proposal can be finalised. The Commission's need for speed should not jeopardize the quality of the final regulation and principle-driven development of the organic sector."

IFOAM EU President Christopher Stopes concluded: "We share the goal of achieving a better regulation, but for the regulation to be an improvement it must work in practice and support the further development of the organic sector in Europe. IFOAM EU has proposals on the table, is eager to deliver concrete solutions and continue to work with the institutions on a practical way forward."

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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.