



International Federation
of Organic Agriculture Movements
EU Regional Group

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WELCOME NOTE

Dear readers,

At last year our European Organic Congress we launched the [roadmap to making our 2030 Vision a reality](#). This journey has set off and will continue to boost initiatives of stakeholders and policymakers towards making our vision for organic in 2030 a reality – hand in hand with achieving the [United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs).

This year we continued on the path to making our vision a reality at the 12th European Organic Congress in Vienna, organised by IFOAM EU and BioAustria. The Congress focussed on how to make the food and farming sector more resilient in the face of environmental and socioeconomic pressure. The theme of this year's Congress was "Organic on every table: Added value for farmers, consumers and society", and addressed both present issues and future concerns on the conversion towards organic farming.

To this aim, the 12th European Organic Congress brought together an array of high-level national and European decision-makers, academia, and key stakeholders within food and farming, committed to making genuine and reliable contributions to organic. Our programme included more than thirty speakers and moderators, divided into four plenary sessions and two parallel sessions.

A focal point of the discussions was the European Commission's revision of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Tassos Haniotis, Director of the European Commission assured that the new CAP architecture is inclusive of organic principles, but respondents pointed out that there's a need of a better structure for budget allocations. IFOAM EU President Jan Plagge stressed the importance of allocating money to support environmental efforts, while IFOAM EU's farmer representative Laurent Moinet pointed at the risks and opportunities of the new CAP proposal.

During the plenary session on "Fair Play, Fair Pay", the current European Commission proposal to limit Unfair Trading Practices in agriculture was on the table. Participants emphasised the need to continuously explore new economic approaches and innovative business models that would ensure transparency, fairness towards the farmers, and respect for the environment. Read the political hot spot of this newsletter for an update about the Commission proposal on Unfair Trading Practices.

On day two of the congress, there was a session on the new Organic Regulation. This session focused on the advantages and the limits of regulations and on the ongoing development of the secondary legislation. The new Organic Regulation will apply from 2021. IFOAM EU President Jan Plagge closed the two-day conference with a call to keep working on and innovating together within the European institutions and beyond, to uphold the values of organic agriculture and to put organic on every table.

The discussions during the 12th European Organic Congress showcased the commitment of key actors and their willingness to transform food and farming in Europe by supporting the organic movement. IFOAM EU demonstrated, once again, that it is a strong political player with an important role in paving the road towards a more organic Europe, in close collaboration with its members, partners and other like-minded stakeholders.

I'm also happy to announce to you that IFOAM EU is already working on the 13th edition of the European Organic Congress in 2019. Stay tuned on [the Congress website](#), IFOAM EU's [Twitter](#) & [Facebook](#) accounts or [subscribe to our newsletter](#) to receive updates.

Organic regards,

Eduardo Cuoco



POLITICAL HOTSPOT

Unfair Trading Practices: Update from the Parliament and the Council

After 10 years of debating about the issue with experts, stakeholders and Member States, in April 2018 the European Commission published a [proposal](#) for a directive on unfair trading practices in business-to-business relationships in the food supply chain. This proposal was welcomed by most stakeholders who saw the necessity for European-wide legislation to address the issue of trans-border unfair trading practices (UTPs).

IFOAM EU is working on this file both internally, as well as with a coalition of NGOs comprising for instance Oxfam, Fair Trade, and Traidcraft.

IFOAM EU's position

IFOAM EU specifically welcomed the Commission's proposal on UTPs in its [position paper](#) and highlighted ways to strengthen the proposal. One of the most contentious issues in this file is the scope of the proposal in terms of actors covered. The Commission foresees the coverage of SME suppliers and large buyers, while many stakeholders, including IFOAM EU, advocate for the full coverage of actors for the sake of fairness in the food supply chain. Another point of contention is the list of UTPs that are explicitly banned in the proposal, which IFOAM EU would like to see lengthened. IFOAM EU also advocated for giving NGOs who have an expertise in producer-related issues the opportunity to also be able to file a complaint. The Commission proposal only stipulates this opportunity for producers and producer organisations.

Policy-making: State of play

Following the publication of this proposal, both the European Parliament and the Council worked hard to each develop a position.

Council

On 1 October 2018, Member States in the Special Committee on Agriculture (SCA) [reached an agreement](#) regarding the negotiating position of the Council. The Council's position does not seem to vary massively from that of the Commission, the biggest exception being the scope of products which the Council has extended to agricultural and food products, instead of only food products as is the case in the initial Commission proposal.

European Parliament

The lead committee in the European Parliament is the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI), with Member of European Parliament (MEP) Paolo De Castro as rapporteur. Three additional committees were involved in this proposal: the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) with rapporteur: MEP Tarabella, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) with rapporteur MEP Ayuso, and the Committee on Development (DEVE) with rapporteur MEP McAvan.

As the lead committee is AGRI, the current article will focus on the report of this committee. In general, the report is quite positive as it took into account many of the points that IFOAM EU and other NGOs were advocating for. For instance, the scope in terms of actors was extended to the whole supply chain, certain NGOs can file a complaint, a definition of UTPs was included in the report, and the possibility of a review clause was included in the report. However, a negative amendment was voted through in the final AGRI report which prohibits "*provisions laid down by the buyer regarding environmental protection and animal welfare standards which are more stringent than the relevant legal provisions in force*". As such, our current advocacy efforts in terms of the Parliament's report are devolved into not adopting this amendment in the final report.

On 25 October, the Parliament gave a mandate to the rapporteur and the first of the trilogue negotiations with the three institutions took place on the same day.

Next steps

Further to the Parliament's vote and the first trilogue negotiations on 25 October at midday, the next trilogues are scheduled on 7 and 21 November.

One particularity of this file is that the negotiations are happening very rapidly given that actors involved are pushing for the legislation to be adopted prior to the next European elections. As such, the aim is to adopt this legislative act by May 2019. Advocacy efforts during the trilogues will be to bring the Commission's and the Council's proposals closer to the Parliament's report (with the exception of the amendment mentioned above). In addition, a Commission proposal on market transparency is expected by the end of this year and would complement the UTP proposal with the aim of increasing fairness in the supply chain even more.

1 NEWS FROM IFOAM EU WORKING FIELDS

1.1 Regulation

The development of the secondary 'organic' legislation is ongoing

In June 2018 the new [Organic Regulation](#) was published in the Official Journal of the European Union, it will apply from 1 January 2021. Currently, all the secondary legislation is being developed in order to have a full set of rules ready at the latest 6 months before the date of application.

The text published in the Official Journal is the one that will replace the current Reg. (EC) No 834/2007. In it, there are around 50 delegations of power to the Commission to further develop the requirements for production, labelling, control and import. Comparing this to the current organic regulations, it means that the new Reg. (EC) No 889/2008 and the new Reg. (EC) No 1235/2008 still need to be discussed and approved.

The Commission's working plan is to first develop the production rules – plant, livestock, aquaculture, food, feed – in 2018. In 2019 it would develop the control system, and the international trade at the end of 2019.

Since 2009, following the EU Treaty of Lisbon's implementation, the EU legislative process has significantly changed. Therefore, the new organic regulation will have a different structure compared to the current one.

The basic text published last June will be complemented by a certain number of two different legal acts, named Delegated Acts and Implementing Acts. Put simply, both kinds of acts are first discussed by the Commission with the experts from the Member States, and they then will briefly pass through the EU Parliament and the EU Council. Do note that this is a simplification of the actual process.

IFOAM EU is actively following these processes and has already started providing a broad range of input to all the EU institutions with the help of the expertise, knowledge and the experience of its membership.

New Organic Implementing Regulation published

A new amendment to Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 has been published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

[New Regulation \(EU\) 2018/1584](#) was modified on different points, including:

- Sodium hydroxide is now authorized to clean and disinfect frames, hives and combs in beekeeping;
- Cholesterol can be now supplemented to the diet of young shrimps and prawns;
- It is clarified that organic baby food can be supplemented with minerals, vitamins and other substances;
- A derogation for non-organically reared pullets for egg production is postponed until 31 December 2020;

- A derogation for the use of 5% non-organic protein feed for pigs and poultry is postponed until 31 December 2020;
- Communication between Member States on non-compliances should now occur through the specific Commission's computer system;
- Changes in list of allowed fertilisers in Annex I;
- Changes in the list of allowed plant protection products in Annex II;
- Changes in the list of allowed products for wine production in Annex VIIIa.

Visit the [IFOAM EU website for a complete overview of all EU organic regulations](#).

1.2 Policy

Food, farming and environment

The Declaration for the Rights of Peasants: one step further towards its adoption

On 28 September 2018, after 17 years of negotiating, the Human Rights Council of the United Nations passed a [resolution adopting the 'Declaration for the Rights of Peasants and other people working in rural areas'](#) with 33 votes in favour, 3 against and 11 abstentions. In November, the declaration will be up for voting by all Member States of the United Nations, for adoption.

This Declaration would be a powerful tool for peasants and other people living in rural areas, as it would recognize specific rights for them: right to land, seeds, biodiversity... and provide an international framework for the development of national policies dedicated to protecting those rights.

The Declaration also recognizes the specific need to protect peasant women who *'play a significant role in the economic survival of their families and in contributing to the rural and national economy'* but *'are often denied tenure and ownership of land, equal access to land, productive resources, financial services, information, employment or social protection, and are often victims of violence and discrimination in a variety of forms and manifestations'*. Thus, States shall eliminate all forms of discrimination against peasant women and promote their empowerment.

For more information, visit [European Coordination Via Campesina's website](#).

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are making Europe more organic – Check SME ORGANICS' new video

For the past two years SME Organics has worked towards the promotion of organic farming in eight regions from seven different countries across Europe. [Have a look at the project video](#) describing the project's successes and next steps!

SME ORGANICS is focused on the implementation of strong policies and the identification of funding instruments aimed to support the development of organic market in a sustainable matter.

The projects' success is built upon the involvement of stakeholders from key areas, such as production, processing, commercialization, marketing, training and governance. Together they have developed Regional Actions Plans with customized procedures and funding methods. To learn about using organic actions plans to develop organics, read the second edition of ['Organic Action Plans – Development, implementation and evaluation'](#), and [get inspired about what best practices the participating regions are using to develop the organic sector](#).

For the second phase of the project which will end in 2020, SME Organics is committed to implement their Organic Action Plans and to continue sharing experience and knowledge among the regions.

Find out more about [SME ORGANICS on the project's website](#).



GMOs

IFOAM EU calls for a moratorium on gene-drive

In November, the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will have important discussions on the Convention and on the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols, related to genetic engineering techniques and genetic resources.

Notably, parties will discuss about gene-drive technology that aims to genetically modify or even eradicate entire populations, for example mosquitoes. A number of applications of gene drive are actually envisaged in the agri-food sector. Because of the lack of knowledge and the potential serious ecological and societal effects of this technique, **IFOAM EU calls for an international moratorium on the release into the environment of organisms modified by gene-drive technology.**

Together with 27 other NGOs, [IFOAM EU called the European Commission to support this moratorium during the negotiation on the Convention held in November](#). You can support IFOAM EU's call for this by sharing our message on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

IFOAM EU also co-signed, an international '[call to protect food systems from genetic extinction technology: the global food and agriculture movement says NO to release of gene drives](#)' with more than 200 organisations and prominent individuals.



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1.3 EU Research & Innovation Policy / TP Organics

Register now for the Organic Innovation Days – deadline for registration end of October!

TP Organics' annual event on will feature high-level speakers and showcase novel innovations in the organic and agroecological food and farming sector. The event takes place 27-29 November in Brussels. Make sure to register now – seats are limited!

Highlights of the [agenda](#):

- Policy debate on [Horizon Europe](#), the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation for the period 2021-2027;
- Award ceremony of TP Organics' [Call for Organic Innovations](#);
- Looking beyond organics: Fairness in food & farming - Biodegradable plastics for organic farming - Ecology meets technology & more;
- Workshop for preparing the new Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda of TP Organics;
- Networking dinner on 28 November.

[Consult the full draft programme as PDF.](#)

On 27 November, TP Organics members can take part in the stakeholder forum with the TP Organics Steering Committee. Participants of the workshop sessions on 27 November will receive a privilege ticket that grants them free entrance to the G-STIC conference on 28-30 November.

Participants to the Organic Innovation Days have the opportunity to attend the networking dinner on 28 November as well as the exhibition night on the 29 November.

[Remember to register for the event](#) before 31 October.



For more information about the [Organic Innovation Days 2018](#), please [contact TP Organics](#) or visit www.tporganics.eu.

This year, the [Organic Innovation Days](#) are a joint event with the [G-STIC conference](#). The sessions on agroecology, organised by TP Organics together with the Third World Network, feature a high-level dialogue on policy action, case studies of agroecology technologies & innovations as well as their implementation at scale.



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On farm feeding for organic broilers

Marc Pousin's farm in Saint-Pierre-des-Échaubrognes, France provides 100% organic, local feed for its broilers. OK-Net EcoFeed had the chance to visit and learn from the mixed farm (crops, cattle, sheep and different poultry species), the founder of the Volailles Bio de l'Ouest (VBO-West Organic Poultry Coop) cooperation. The farm has 3 free range areas with 2 buildings each and a small on farm feed "factory".

The feed composition is settled together with Aliments Mercier, a French organic feed company, providing local supplying strategies. The feedstuff composition of the farm is the following: 25% is self-made on the farm, 50% is bought from a neighbour (50–100 km) and 25% mixed protein/minerals are bought to Mercier Aliments and formulated to be adapted with the farmers feedstuff.

The visit to the farm was part of the Horizon 2020 project, OK-Net EcoFeed. The project had its second project meeting in Angers, France, on 24-26 September 2018, where two other parallel visits took place. One to an organic laying-eggs farm with 95% organic feed, purchased outside the farm and one to UFAB (Union Française de l'Agriculture Biologique) the leader organic feed company in France.

A visit to an organic pig farm was also planned but had to be cancelled due to alerts of the African swine fever in France.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement Liveseed (No 727230)

Horizon Europe – TP Organics works with European Parliament and Council to prioritise organic and agroecology

At the end of September, the members of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) of the European Parliament tabled almost 3,000 amendments to the proposals on Horizon Europe. Jakop Dalunde, Swedish Member of European Parliament for the Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance, made several amendments supporting research for organic and agroecological farming, while emphasizing civil society engagement, and asking for transdisciplinary and multi-actor research. Jakop Dalunde asked that *"the budget dedicated to research aimed specifically at agroecological approaches to benefit both organic and conventional systems shall be ring-fenced at 20% of the total budget spent on agriculture, forestry, rural areas and food systems."* TP Organics is analysing all amendments and will prepare recommendations for the vote on the reports in the ITRE Committee, which is expected on 21 November.

In a meeting with Christian Naczinsky, Chief coordinator of the Austrian EU Council Presidency in the field of research and Head of Department for EU and OECD Research Policy, TP Organics again stressed the importance of organic research and of involving civil society in research programming.

Regarding the missions, a new form of objective-focused research programmes in Horizon Europe, the European Commission has drawn a list of 12 themes on request of the Council. One of the themes proposed is "healthy sustainable and resilient agri-food systems". The final list of missions will be included in an annex to

the legal texts, to be adopted as implementing act. TP Organics will work to prioritise organic and agroecology in the description of the agri-food mission.

A call to organic seed suppliers and seed breeders: Participate to a crucial step in data collection on organic seed & plant breeding

As a seed supplier / breeder you are invited to participate in a [survey on the status quo of organic seed production in Europe](#).

LIVESEED is aiming to reach seed producers, traders and breeders of organic and conventional seed in Europe and Switzerland, to get a better idea of the current status and motivations in seed production.

[The survey](#) is available in English, French, German, Hungarian, Spanish, and will take you 15-30 minutes to complete – depending on the number of crop groups you are working on.

Information on the survey:

The survey is divided in two parts.

1. In the first part we are interested in your evaluation on opportunities, risks and challenges towards organic seed production and breeding.
2. In the second part we are aiming to collect missing data on organic seed sales in Europe and Switzerland to calculate the gap towards a 100% use of organic seed.

[Fill out the LIVESEED seed supplier and breeder survey.](#)

The survey is carried out within the LIVESEED project. FiBL Germany drafted the survey in cooperation with a large number of partners. You may withdraw your participation at any time, without consequences. Your identity will be protected, and all data will be anonymised.



LIVESEED received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement Liveseed (No 72723).

Farm demonstration knowledge across Europe in one platform

Looking for farm demonstration activities in Europe? Check out a newly launched [platform](#) that brings them all together.

Available in 17 languages, the FarmDemo platform is the first result of the NEFERTITI project. It aims to present agricultural demonstration activities across Europe and give a possibility for farmers or innovation actors to join the growing community of demo farms. Organic demo farm activities will be related to two networks: [Robust Organic Livestock](#) and [Increasing Productivity and Quality in Organic Arable Cropping](#).

The first demo farms and activities of these networks will be uploaded soon. The project is currently looking for innovation actors willing to join the demo community.

Read more on how to [participate](#) and [sign up for updates](#).



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement NEFERTITI (No 727205).

2 IFOAM EU DEVELOPMENTS

Do you have experience in communications and are you familiar with social media? Apply now to the position Communications Coordinator to join our dynamic team!

IFOAM EU is seeking a full-time Communications Coordinator who will have the opportunity to work on a variety of food and farming related topics. You will be working with small, but highly motivated team on maintaining and further developing IFOAM EU's communications, communications tools and outreach activities towards media, organic stakeholders and a general audience.

Please read the full vacancy description and apply by sending your application form to employment@ifoam-eu.org by November 16th, 2018. Only complete applications using the Application Form will be considered.

Qualifications and Experiences

- Master's degree in Communications, International Affairs, Public Relations or equivalent
- 3 years experiences in communication or media

- Knowledge and skills
- Experience in developing print and online content
- Experience in developing print and online content
- Excellent verbal and written command of English
- Basic graphic design skills and knowledge of online tools
- Flexible and able to adapt to new situations

Introducing IFOAM EU's new interest group: the Interest Group for Organic Retailers (IGOR)

The first official meeting of the Interest Group of Organic Retailers (IGOR) took place on 26 September in Vienna.

Setting up this group gives organic retailers the opportunity to speak with one voice when confronted with the decision-making process at EU level, as well as enabling its members to share best practices and other information among each other. Last but not least, the creation of the IGOR empowers IFOAM EU as the whole supply chain is now more legitimately represented within the association.

During this first meeting members shared their experiences at national level and discussed about relevant topics for the sector such as precisely defining what specialised organic retailers actually are and how they operate. Companies and associations present at this first meeting were: Biogast (Austria), Färm (Belgium), Synadisbio (France), BNN (Germany), Dennree (Germany), Naturata (Luxembourg), Biowinkelvereniging (the Netherlands), Bionext (the Netherlands) and Ecovalia (Spain). EcorNaturaSi (Italy) is part of the group but could not be present at the last moment.

This is the third interest group that has been established within IFOAM EU, after the Interest Group for Organic Processors and Traders (IGOP) and the Interest Group for Organic Farmers (IGOF).

Read IFOAM EU's 2017 annual report

IFOAM EU is active across Europe, advocating for organic food and farming at all levels. Find out all about the topics IFOAM EU is advocating for, the activities we do, the projects we're involved in and many more in the [IFOAM EU 2017 annual report](#).

Keen to learn about initiatives transforming food and farming in Europe? Visit www.euorganic2030.bio and submit your own initiative



The organic movement is a front-runner when it comes to setting the stage for fair, environmentally conscious, healthy and caring food and farming systems across the globe. To achieve its [ambitious vision by 2030](#), IFOAM EU is collecting successful initiatives and projects that are [transforming food and farming in Europe](#).

The initiatives should be projects and programmes that are not older than four years and that address one of the following aspects:

1. Organic on every table: initiatives and examples that make organic widely available and recognised
2. Improve – inspire – deliver: initiatives and examples that develop organic further and inspire others
3. Fair play – fair pay: initiatives and examples to achieve more transparency and fairness in the value chain

Need inspiration? Go to [euorganic2030.bio](#) and find many – new – initiatives! You're invited to [submit your own initiative too!](#) Relevant submissions will be profiled on [EUorganic2030.bio](#) and [on social media using #EUorganic2030](#).



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Saying goodbye to our colleagues

After three months of working together, IFOAM EU's Communications Unit says goodbye to Ariane. Even though the collaboration was short, we really appreciated Ariane's calm contributions and hard work. Her ability to take in new information and adapt to new situations was of great help.

We'd like to wish her all the best with her continuation of her Master of Arts in European Politics at the Universities of Göttingen, Germany, and Strasbourg, France. We're sure she'll continue to contribute to help spread the message of sustainable farming systems and organic principles.

Welcoming our new colleagues

Andreea Popa will reinforce the IFOAM EU Communications Unit until June 2019. After completing her Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Sciences at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in Romania, Andreea moved to the United Kingdom to pursue a master's in International Development, Environment, Sustainability and Politics at University of Birmingham. For her dissertation, she conducted a field research on the impact of environmental disasters over indigenous communities in Minas Gerais, Brazil. Additionally, she did an internship focused on conservation and sustainability in Cape Verde, which helped her expand her knowledge in the environmental field.

Andreea hopes that through her EVS placement at IFOAM EU she will improve her overall skills and she will learn more about sustainable practices and the work of both NGOs and European institutions.



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3 EVENTS

3.1 Preview of events

Dynamic developments in organic research – strengthening partnerships across Europe and beyond. 6th International Conference on Organic Agriculture Sciences (ICOAS)

7-9 November, Eisenstadt, Austria

ICOAS will bring together researchers, policy makers, entrepreneurs, associations, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders to discuss about innovations and organic production, complex value chains and organic trade, socio-economic challenges, consumers' perspectives and expectations, possibilities and limitations of organic markets, and many others.

The registration is still open, please click [here](#).

Annual meeting of the expert group on capacity building in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)

8 November, Eisenstadt, Austria

The meeting will take place on the 8 November in Eisenstadt. It will bring the members of the CEE expert group to discuss the challenges for the development of local markets in Central and Eastern Europe.

The event will be organized within the international Scientific Conference on Organic Agriculture Sciences (ICOAS).



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European Copper Conference - Final programme online

15-16 November 2018, Julius Kühn-Institut, Berlin-Dahlem, Germany

To discuss innovative ways to keep plants healthy in organic and integrated plant protection, and to identify research and farm management options to further reduce the use of copper, BÖLW, IFOAM EU and Julius Kühn-Institut invite you to take part in the [3rd European Conference on Copper in Plant Protection](#).

Farmers and growers, scientists, regulators, agricultural advisers and other people working with/on copper in a context of plant protection are welcome to share experience and ideas.

[Check out the Conference's programme](#) and register now for the [3rd European Conference on Copper in Plant Production](#).

Dynamic growth in organic acreage in many European countries means new challenges for farmers concerning plant health. By combining clever crop rotation systems, enhancement of functional biodiversity, selection of robust varieties and the application of natural substances against pests and diseases, organic farmers and growers strive to keep their plants healthy without having to rely on synthetic pesticides.

While there are various ways and strategies to lower the risk of being affected by diseases like apple scab, mildew or potato blight, copper-based formulations are almost the only tool to combat actual infections. At the same time, copper can have negative impacts on soil and water organisms, so organic farmers are looking for strategies to minimize copper use, supporting EU law requirements for EU member states to take action on copper minimization.



3.2 Review of events

Join Natexpo – France’s international trade show for organic products

23 – 24 September 2018, Eurexpo Lyon, France

The first Natexpo edition to take place in the beautiful city of Lyon was a success, gathering [9,600 professionals](#) from the organic sector.

The lively discussions on food, cosmetics, food supplements, services to shops or innovation between companies, regions, retailers, policy-makers and organic associations like Natexbio and Synabio, reflected the dynamism of the French organic sector, but also addressed the challenges linked to the rapid growth of the market and to the increasing number of players. They proved the relevance of Natexpo, which has been the biggest organic trade event in France, but which is now also becoming a major international gathering.

IFOAM EU’s Deputy Director and Policy Manager Eric Gall represented IFOAM EU at this year’s edition of Natexpo.

IFOAM EU’s Council meets in Vienna, Austria

24-25 September, Vienna, Austria

On 24-25 September, the IFOAM EU Council members met in Vienna. They agreed on important political issues and elected the new Chair and Vice-Chairs.

Hosted in the campus of the University of Vienna, 19 country representatives elected the new IFOAM EU Council Chairs for 2018-2020:

- Chair of the Council: Evelyne Alcazar Marin, Ecovalia, Spain
- Vice Chair of the Council: Dorota Metera, Poland

The two-day meeting was very fruitful. Besides the elections, 31 attendees from across Europe got informed on a wide range of topics and exchanged on different scenarios for organic food and farming across Europe.



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Unfair Trading Practices at the 12th European Organic Congress

25 – 26 September 2018, Vienna, Austria

Right before the final vote in the European Parliament’s Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (ComAGRI) on the proposal for a Directive on Unfair Trading Practices, this same proposal, as well as its context and its implications, were discussed at the 12th European Organic Congress in Vienna.

The panel was opened by Fabio Brescacin, CEO of the organic retailer EcoNaturaSi in Italy who stressed the importance of paying farmers a fair price for their produce. Followed Sophie Tack, Board member of the Fair Trade Advocacy Office, who brought the development angle into the discussion, stressing that both producers inside and outside of Europe should be treated fairly. From the European Commission’s side, Oliver Sitar explored the reasoning behind this proposal. Gertraud Grabmann, president of BioAustria welcomed the proposal and highlighted the importance of also addressing market transparency by proposing an effective piece of legislation in this respect. Tomáš Ignác Fénix, President of the European Council of Young Farmers

(CEJA), stressed that a proposal addressing the occurrence of unfair trading practices was needed at European level to strengthen the farmers' position in the food supply chain.

For an update on the political state of play regarding this legislative proposal, please refer to the political hotspot of this newsletter.



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The Common Agricultural Policy at the 12th European Organic Congress

25 – 26 September 2018, Vienna, Austria

The 12th European Organic Congress was a timely occasion to discuss the revision of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for the post-2020 period, as the legislative proposals had been published by the European commission three months before. The CAP discussion took place in two complementary sessions: a plenary with dealing with the political elements of the revision; and a parallel session on the technical aspects of the proposed New Delivery Model and new Green Architecture. In both, speakers explored new opportunities within the CAP proposal and ways to build upon it.

The plenary discussion was composed of a panel of high-level speakers and featured a lively discussion. Director at European Commission DG AGRI, Tassos Haniotis, presented the main features of the proposal, explaining that organic farming was well placed within CAP's new architecture. The Austrian Secretary General for Agriculture, Josef Plank, welcomed the new flexibility but questioned the potential for additional administrative burden. The Member of the European Parliament, Herbert Dorfmann, welcomed the needed reform but was concerned about the reduced budget for the CAP. IFOAM EU's President, Jan Plagge, stressed the risk of a race to the bottom in terms of environmental efforts, if a part of the CAP budget is not earmarked for action on the environment and climate change. This prompted a debate on environmental ambition in terms of budget allocations and value for sustainability of the measures that could be supported. Copa-Cogeca's Secretary General, Pekka Pesonen, highlighted the potential of precision farming.

The parallel session focused on the risks and opportunities of the CAP proposal for organic farming. Organic farmer and chairman of IFOAM EU Farmers group, Laurent Moinet highlighted the potential advantages for organic farming in the newly proposed eco-schemes under pillar I and the possibility to use it as a top up. He also warned about the loose definition of this instrument and the danger that unsustainable techniques may be included. The Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) stressed that while moving to a results-based model is a step in the right direction for a targeted CAP, there are insufficient safeguards to avoid freeriding by Member States. The process and criteria to approve national CAP strategic plans were questioned, as well as the space to consult civil society.

Both sessions fed directly into IFOAM EU's advocacy work on the CAP.



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The 12th European Organic Congress – Adding value for farmers, consumers and society through exchange
25 – 26 September 2018, Vienna, Austria

The 12th edition of the European Organic Congress was a success, gathering over 200 participants from across Europe to exchange ideas during the two-day congress and a full day of excursions.

IFOAM EU organised the Congress in close cooperation with Bio Austria, which took place in the centre of Vienna within the rooms of the historical landmark of Billrothhaus. The congress gathered participants from a wide range of fields, including high-level policy-makers at EU and national level, academia and stakeholders across the organic supply chain including organic farmers, food processors, retailers and competent authorities.

The programme included over thirty speakers and moderators, divided into four plenary sessions and two breakup parallel sessions. Among the highlights was a lively debate from the plenary session on the revision of CAP, with high-level panellists including a Member of the European Parliament in charge of the report on “the future of food and farming”, a European Commission Director at DG AGRI, and the Secretary General of Austria’s Federal Ministry in charge of agriculture. The plenary on Fair Play and Fair Pay opened with an inspiring keynote speech of organic retailer NaturaSi, speakers then discussed with the current EU proposal to limit unfair trading practices in agriculture including the Council of European Young Farmers, Bio Austria’s president representing the organic sector, the European Commission presenting the proposal and a global perspective from Fair Trade Advocacy Office. The concluding plenary composed of organic entrepreneurs, an economist and a researcher explored new economic approaches that may enable the transition towards a vibrant and sustainable agricultural sector, ranging from short supply chains, to upscaling and new takes on marketing. The president of IFOAM EU closed the two-day conference with a call to keep working and innovating together within the EU and beyond, to uphold the values of organic agriculture and to put organic on every table.

On the third day a well-attended excursion took participants to three organic enterprises in lower Austria. The first stop was at Sonnentor, a local company processing and selling a wide variety of organic teas and herbs which grew to across the world becoming one of Austria’s most successful enterprises. The second visit and lunch were at the Nikolaihof vineyard, which is renowned across the world for its award-winning organic biodynamic wines. The day ended with an excursion in the Farm of Alfred Grand, who experiments with innovative farming techniques and equipment to farm arable crops, as well as producing composts with earthworms.

IFOAM EU will welcome you in the summer of 2019 for the 13th edition of the EOC to discuss the latest markets and regulatory developments of the organic sector.



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Discussing the revision of the Common Agricultural Policy in the European Parliament

10 October 2018, Brussels, Belgium

IFOAM EU organised an event “How can the Common Agricultural Policy help farmers do more for the environment” in the European Parliament on 10 October. Member of the European Parliament (MEP) and Shadow Rapporteur responsible for the CAP revision Maria Noichl hosted the event.

The event gathered experts from the European Parliament, the European Commission, organic farmers and NGOs to discuss how the ongoing CAP revision can play a crucial role in boosting eco-entrepreneurship in the farming sector. The European Commission services for the environment and agriculture introduced the key features of the proposal’s green architecture, with a focus on eco-schemes and rural development. Jan Plagge, IFOAM EU’s President, presented the new CAP position paper of the organic movement, mentioning the need to raise the environmental ambition in the policy. Hans Bartelme talked about his experience with CAP



payments as a full-time organic farmer, and called for a policy that allows farmers to take their own decisions and which rewards ambitious environmental practices.

During the discussion, session participants mentioned the importance of strong conditionality rules applying to all farmers, the need to better define agricultural measures eligible under eco-schemes to avoid “green plating” and a stronger governance structure setting rules on what is allowed under national strategic plans.

Members of the European Parliament will work on the CAP dossier at Committee level during the coming months up to the European elections of May 2019, and it is expected to continue under the new parliament thereafter. IFOAM EU will continue following each step of the revision.

Seeds in the new organic regulation, IFOAM EU present at conference at the European Parliament

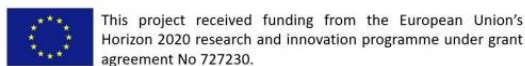
16 October 2018, Brussels, Belgium

Arche Noah organised an event in the European Parliament to discuss the new provisions on seeds in the new organic regulation. Topics of discussion at the event were organic heterogenous material, and an outlook on organic varieties.

IFOAM EU talked about the availability of organic seeds, and presented first results of the [LIVSEED project](#). The conference participants showed keen interest to participate in the project and in the upcoming farmers' survey.

The presentation was followed by vivid exchange with Arche Noah and Copa-Cogeca. Common understanding of the current situation and the need to improve the availability and usage of organic seed became clear. DG Sante announced that a stakeholder consultation will take place for developing the delegated act on organic heterogenous material. MEPs Martin Hausling and Eric Andrieu called on the Commission to respect the intention of the EP to allow organic farmers to use more genetically diverse plant reproductive material, and to not restrict the new possibilities offered by the new organic regulation.

[Re-watch the conference 'Seed in the new organic regulation'](#).



EIP-AGRI Seminar: From Operational Group project to impact

17-18 October 2018, Spoleto, Italy

IFOAM EU has participated in the EIP-AGRI Seminar: 'From Operational Group project to impact'. The seminar took place in Spoleto, Italy 17-18 October 2018. The event was hosted by Umbria Region in collaboration with the Italian National Rural Network and the Italian Ministry of Agricultural, Food, Forestry Policies and Tourism (MiPAAFT).

Participants had the chance to listen good practices and to discuss current issues, such as simplification, reporting and dissemination of results in the EIP-AGRI implementation. Further more field visits were organized to get inspiration and learn from different Operational Groups of the region. For more info visit:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/event/eip-agri-seminar-operational-group-to-impact> (link is external)

The 12th EIP-AGRI Subgroup on Innovation Meeting started right after the seminar. Calls for the next EIP-AGRI focus groups, workshops and seminars for 2019 were addressed. The Call for the 5 new focus groups will be launched in March, covering varying themes. A Summit on agroecology (similar as the Agri-Innovation Summit in Lisbon 2017) will take place in June 2019, in France. The exact dates and program will be launched later.



4 MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC – SUPPORT IFOAM EU

IFOAM EU key supporters 2018

The contributions of sponsors allow IFOAM EU to focus on its most important work – representing organic stakeholders. This funding is a means to co-finance IFOAM EU events, projects and publications and is a highly valued contribution to our work.



5 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

27-28 October 2018

[Good Food Good Farming](#)

Mass mobilisation for sustainable agriculture in cities across Europe

14-15 November 2018

[Natural Products Scandinavia & Nordic Organic Food Fair](#)

MalmöMässan, Sweden

15-16 November 2018

[European Conference on Copper in Plant Protection](#)

Berlin, Germany

27-28 November 2018

RELACS project partners' annual meeting

Bari, Italy

27-29 November 2018

[Organic Innovation Days](#)

Brussels, Belgium

13-16 February 2019

[Biofach 2019](#)

Nürnberg, Germany