



PRESS RELEASE

FARMERS, BREEDERS AND SEED SAVER ORGANISATIONS CALL ON MEMBER STATES TO PROTECT FARMERS' SEED EXCHANGES IN A JOINT LETTER

BRUSSELS, 19 JUNE 2025 – A coalition of organisations representing farmers, breeders, and seed savers has sent today a [joint letter to EU Agriculture Ministers urging them to safeguard farmers' rights to exchange seeds](#).

The signatories urge Member States to ensure the future Plant Reproductive Material (PRM) Regulation explicitly recognises farmers' rights to save, use, exchange, and sell their seeds, including with financial compensation.

"For generations, farmers have saved and shared their seeds, adapting them locally and creating rich agrobiodiversity. Prohibiting these practices would be a step backwards", said Eduardo Cuoco, Director of IFOAM Organics Europe. "Different farming systems have different needs and realities, and the seed legislation must take all these different needs into account. Acknowledging and supporting seed exchange does not mean to jeopardize the commercial seed markets" he continued.

"Farmer-to-farmer seed exchange is not only a vital tool for food sovereignty and agrobiodiversity, it is also a living expression of cultural heritage and community resilience. We call on EU Member States to uphold farmers' rights to save, share, and cultivate seeds adapted to local conditions." highlighted Marta Messa, Slow Food Secretary General.

"Farmers' PRM exchanges are already recognized in several member States, and tolerated in many others, as it is a necessary practice for the dynamic management of agrobiodiversity. The new PRM regulation could be a considerable setback for farmers' rights to seeds in Europe", added Alessandra Turco from European Coordination Via Campesina's Coordinating Committee. "Let us ensure the future of seeds remains diverse, decentralised and democratic", she concluded.

While the [Commission's proposal](#) included an article to allow exchange of seeds between farmers, which was [supported and expanded by the European Parliament](#), the [latest progress report of the Polish EU Council Presidency](#) on the PRM completely deleted the article – a move strongly condemned by the coalition.

To ensure farmers' right to seeds is protected and aligned with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants (UNDROP), the signatories call on Member States to reintroduce provisions allowing farmers to exchange plant reproductive material in the upcoming regulation, to ensure quantity limits reflect farmers' actual needs and to reject geographic limits.

The Council position on this reform of the EU seed legislation (PRM file) will be discussed next Monday by Agriculture ministers at the AGRIFISH Council.

Signatories (from alphabetic order): ARCHE NOAH, Biodynamic Federation Demeter International, European Coordination Via Campesina, IFOAM Organics Europe, Slow Food.

Ends.

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Background information

Useful documents

European Union official documents

- [European Commission proposal](#) for a regulation on Plant Reproductive Material (PRM).
- [European Parliament's position](#) on the PRM Regulation.
- [Latest progress report](#) of the Polish EU Council Presidency on the PRM.

European organic movement's official position

- [Position paper on the review of EU rules on Plant Reproductive Material](#) (2022)
- [Plant Reproductive Material in the new Organic Regulation \(EU\) 2018/848](#) (2019)

IFOAM Organics Europe is the European umbrella organisation for organic food and farming. With almost 200 members in 34 European countries, our work spans the entire organic food chain and beyond: from farmers and processors organisations, retailers, certifiers, consultants, traders, and researchers to environmental and consumer advocacy bodies.



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