



**European Consortium for Organic Plant Breeding**

**Welcome to the 7th European Workshop on Organic Seed Regulation in Brussels 2013**

- Hosted by Flemish Government
- 54 participants from 16 different countries
- Two half days of intensive exchange and discussion

→ Roadmap for the harmonisation and increased usage of organic seed



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**Program 9th October 2013**


- 14:10 Aim of the meeting and short update of the previous workshop (M. Messmer, S. Howlett)
- 14:30 Revision of the organic regulation process and its impact on organic seed (L'Her)
- 14:50 Country reports  
Summary of online survey, Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, France, Czech Republic, Italy, Greece, Spain
- 16:15 Coffee break
- 16:45 Perspective of seed and breeding companies
- 17:45 Perspective of organic farmers organisation
- 18:15 Plenary discussion
- 20:00 Dinner at Ethiopian restaurant KoKoB in city centre



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**Program 10th October 2013**


- 8:30 IFOAM EU role related to seeds (E. Busacca)
- 9:30 Three case studies on production and use of organic seeds
  - Potato (J. van Hoogen, Agrico)
  - Cereals (E. Muehlhausen, KWS)
  - Vegetables (H. Haitsma, Vitalis)
- 10:10 Coffee break
- 10:30 Discussion in subgroups
- 12:00 Presentation of outcome of group discussion
- 12:15 Plenary discussion & Development of roadmap
- 13:00 Light Lunch offered by Flemish Government



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**Why is ECO-PB active in organic seed**


Plant Breeding	Variety testing	Seed propagation
Conventional breeding	Conventional	Conventional untreated
conventional breeding	conventional	<b>organic</b>
conventional breeding	<b>organic</b>	<b>organic</b>
<b>organic plant breeding</b>	<b>organic</b>	<b>organic</b>



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**Varieties for organic farming**

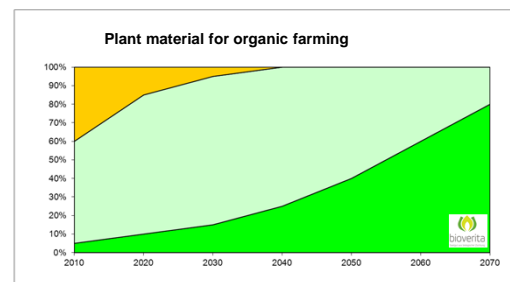
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**Strengthening organic farming by breeding varieties adapted to specific growing conditions**

Plant material for organic farming



Legend:

- organically bred varieties
- conventional bred, propagated under organic conditions
- conventionally bred & multiplied, but without seed treatment



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## Guidelines for organic plant production

Bio Suisse 17.4.2013



### ➤ Organic plant breeding defined according to IFOAM

- All steps performed under certified organic conditions
- No technical intervention below cell level
- Respects natural crossing barriers
- Promotes fertility and natural reproduction of plants
- Transparency of breeding methods
- Refrains from patents on living organisms

### ➤ From 1.1.2014 on cultivars used for the production of Knospe products are preferably from organic plant breeding programs

- If it can be shown that no cultivar in sufficient quality and quantity is available, other cultivars may be used. Bio Suisse is responsible for the monitoring and derogation

- This includes cultivars according to national seed legislation and UPOV regulation as well as population varieties, niche varieties, land races and farmer's selections



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## Main Outcomes I

### ➤ Reporting on organic seed by member countries to the EU needs to be more harmonised.

- Textual explanations of derogation
- Info about why a derogation was issued
- Availability of species/varieties on Category 1 (no derogation)
- Reports should be structured by derogation category system

### ➤ SCOF requested more input from organic stakeholders regarding organic seed issues.

- Main role of reports is to serve as policy instruments



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## Main outcomes II

### ➤ Differences and commonalities in the organisational structure of Expert Groups (EG) between countries were discussed.

- NL: EG comprised of farmers, seed company reps, growers & researchers
- DK: EG is the advisory service of Danish Organic Association & variety testing authority
- FR: EG is responsibility of Ministry of Agriculture & there are two groups 1) organic seed database 2) derogations

EG groups are important to decide about suitability of organic seed available, to get support from farmers about decisions for Annex & increase production and use of organic seed



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## Main outcomes III

### ➤ The wider organic community needs to invest in seed databases

- Currently no common European database
- Some countries have no national databases
- Suggestions made to harmonise existing national databases (e.g. Latin names, meaningful units for quantities...)

### ➤ To protect seed diversity the use of local varieties should not be hindered by seed regulation

- Possibly allow a derogation for conservation varieties, even those in Category 1.
- Include users of local varieties on EG discussions



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## General Conclusions

### ➤ The organic sector has improved in different ways in different countries over the past few years

- Use of National Category 1 has increased
- Seed companies reported rise in organic seed sales in some countries

### ➤ Potential players may lack a strong incentive for development because current regulations are not clear or not coordinated enough among countries.

### ➤ Still urgent need for further European harmonisation on organic seed regulation & derogation reports



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## Publications

### Workshop outcomes summarised in paper:

Thomas F. Döring, Riccardo Bocci, Roger Hitchings, Sally Howlett, Edith Lammerts van Bueren, Marco Pautasso, Maaïke Raaijmakers, Frederic Rey, Anke Stubsgaard, Manfred Weinhappel, Klaus P. Wilbois, Louisa R. Winkler, Martin S. Wolfe (2012). **The organic seed regulations framework in Europe – current status and recommendations for future development.**

*Organic Agriculture* DOI 10.1007/s13165-012-0034-7

<http://orgprints.org/21904/1/Doring%20et%20al%202012-ORGA%20-%20orgprints.pdf>



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