ECO-PB Workshop on the Organic Seed Regulation 9th and 10th Oct. 2013
Input from Germany

Klaus-Peter Wilbois

General Setup in Germany (i)
- 16 Bundesländer (federal states) are responsible for the implementation of the EU Regulation on Organic Farming
- Ca. 20 Inspection bodies
- Agreement to have only ONE organic seed database for Germany
- OrganicXseeds is used as the official data base
- All aspects in one data base (supply, derogation requests, request and issue of derogation etc.)
- Two experts groups (arable, vegetable crops) as advisory groups for the authorities; Official Dr. Dreesmann of Lower Saxony represents the Bundesländer and coordinates meetings

General Setup in Germany (ii)
- All potentially used species are included in the database; derogation for included species only
- Single derogation (issued by the inspection body)
- General derogation for certain species and crop groups in order to avoid excess of bureaucracy (>no availability confirmation by the data base)
- Young plants for trees and grape vine were also entered in the database although not compulsory by the regulation
- Cat. I for certain species from 2013 on (sugar beet, mustard seed, red beet, snake gourd, black raddish, maize (2014))
- Cat I in future: Winter rye, exp. 2015, Ryegrasses (Lolium multiflorum, exp. 2016, Lolium multiflorum var. westerwoldicum exp. 2015), Spring vetch, exp. 2015, Buckwheat, exp. 2015, Potatoes after 30.01. of every year, exp. 2015
- ca. 75 Suppliers listed in organicxseeds.de
- All players in the field feel satisfied with this approach

Progress over the recent years
- The amount of organic seed on offer has strongly increased over the years
- Efforts have been made to enter not only seed but also vegetative propagating material (e.g. strawberies, fruit trees, grapevine)
- Implementation of Cat. I has been broadly agreed and first species are already in Cat. I, further species follow soon
- The number of derogation issued varies between years depending on organic seed availability of predominant varieties (propagation failures) but has been relatively constant over the last 3 years
- FiBL is going to introduce a fully refurbished OrganicXseeds by 2014

Challenges for the time to come
- Inclusion of vegetative propagation material in the Regulation
- Criteria for variety equivalence are lacking, inspection bodies have no reliable basis to decline a derogation for non-organic seed
- Lack of harmonization between countries/lack of common regulatory and implementation approach [available on its territory Art. 48 (1)]
- to many unclear terms in the Regulation (data base, report...)
- Better seed supply, esp. regarding certain types and varieties
- Competition with countries using (cheaper) non-organic seed

Special Challenge: “Non-CMS-Varieties”
- Problem: In Germany immense scandal about CMS-Varieties Chicory, Cabbages) received by applying cell fusion techniques found in organic outlets in Germany
- German private farmers organizations excluded „CMS-Varieties“ from use after 2008 (IFOAM Modena)
- New detection methods revealed that many cabbages, chicory especially from abroad contained non native CMS-Sequences (Ogura, Sunflower)
- FiBL Germany is going to develop a European database (5 main languages) base where „Non-CMS-Varieties“ shall be positively listed
- Deadline for online availability is April 2014