

MOTION 51

The IFOAM General Assembly urges the IFOAM World Board to

1. develop a strategy for the replacement of varieties derived from cell fusion, including protoplast and / or cytoplasm fusion from organic farming practices.
2. define guidelines for the socio-economic implementation of such strategies.
3. promote alternative breeding programs such as organic plant breeding to foster the development of cell fusion free varieties.

In order to achieve these goals by the next GA in 2017, a working group should be installed.

Rationale:

This motion is a reinforcement of the carried motion 26.1 of the GA 2008 in Vignola / Italy:

“The IFOAM General Assembly confirms that cell fusion ...do not comply with the principles of Organic Agriculture. Therefore we urge the IFOAM World Board to develop clear guidelines on how to deal with varieties derived from cell fusion...”

Especially for certain vegetables, the use of varieties derived from cell fusion is constantly increasing as this allows the introduction of cytoplasmic male sterility (CMS), which eases hybrid seed production, whereas open pollinated varieties are disappearing from the market.

Varieties derived from cell fusion are still used by organic farmers, as the declaration of such varieties is not required by law, and their cultivation is legally permitted by national organic regulations. Individual labeling organizations banned the use of these varieties to give a clear incentive to plant breeders to develop “cell fusion-free” breeding programs.

In order to maintain credibility and consumer trust, a common strategy for the replacement of such varieties should be developed for the whole Organic Agriculture sector under the umbrella of IFOAM.