

**Main recommendations from ECO-PB
for the revision process of the organic regulation (834/2007)
based on the results of the 7th European Workshop on Organic Seed Regulation
on the 9th and 10th of October 2013 in Brussels.**

The principle aim is that organic products originate from organic seed or vegetative propagating material

1) A clear target setting is needed to increase the production of organic seed and vegetative propagating material and thereby decrease the number of derogations for the use of non-organic seed and propagating material.

Therefore, we recommend:

- a) To obligate Member States to make a plan to realize a reduction of the amount of (individual and general) derogations for the use of non-organic seed and vegetative propagating material
- b) To obligate Member State to set a national goal for use of organic seed and vegetative propagating material, and to make a plan to increase the use of organic seed and vegetative propagating material (step by step). The Member States shall provide this information to other Member States and the Commission.

2) As a precondition sufficient availability and access to appropriate organic seed and vegetative propagating material must be assured in all member states and on all organic farms. Therefore, we recommend:

- a) To give member states the authority to develop a National Annex. A national Annex is a list of species and sub-species for which no derogation for the use of non-organic seed is allowed in a particular member state. The national Annex has proven to be an effective way to stimulate the production and use of organic seed on a national level. Besides that it stimulates new seed companies to invest in organic seed production.
- b) To stimulate member states to install national expert groups (with i.e. representatives from farmers organizations, seed companies and certification bodies) to judge the offer and demand of the organic propagating material and to advice the government about (sub) species on the National Annex.
- c) The commission to facilitate/develop a template for a uniform European database which is accessible for farmers in their own member state in their own language and easier to fill in for international operating seed suppliers.

3) To create a level playing field clear and uniform definitions are needed. Therefore we recommend:

- a) Seed saved on an organic farm is organic seed. In cases where the use of Farm Saved Seed is allowed (see Plant Variety Act 1997), an organic farmer should be allowed to use his own farm saved seed without asking for derogation or the requirement to certify this seed.
- b) The commission to develop a uniform and clear definition for organic seed, organic seed mixtures and organic vegetative propagating material.

4) There is a possible conflict between the aim to maintain and increase (agro) biodiversity and the obligation to use only (certified) organic seed. Therefore, we recommend:

- a) The current derogation (article 45,5 d) for the use of non-organic seed for experiments, research and conservation purposes should become permanent.
- b) To differentiate the rules for the use of non-organic seed from traditional (conservation and amateur) varieties and from local (niche) varieties.