



ORGAP NEWSLETTER

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Introduction

ORGAP is the acronym of the “Evaluation of the European Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming” a funded research project to provide scientific support for the implementation of the European Action Plan, released by European Commission in June 2004

(http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/qual/organic/plan/index_en.htm). ORGAP has started in May 2005 and will finish in 2008, and will assess its long-term and short-term effects. There are 10 partners participating in the project. Read ORGAP Project partners (link to description, aims, etc in www.orgap.org).

ORGAP Newsletter presentation

ORGAP Newsletter will appear 2-3 times yearly, starting in May 2006, with the aim to inform and disseminate the results and outcomes of the project. Each issue of the ORGAP Newsletter will give also an overview of current topics and developments of the European Organic Food and Farming Action Plan. In addition some information regarding the development of national Organic Actions Plans will be published. It is also the intention that each issue will be more concentrated on information coming from one of the countries being involved in the project.

Organic Actions Plans in Europe

Based on our information at least 17 National or Regional Organic Actions Plan are being implemented in the European Union. ORGAP has already gathered some detailed information from six national (Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, the Netherlands) and two Regional Organic action plans (Andalusia, Spain; England, UK). The comparison of status quo analysis and targets mentioned in the Action Plans shows, that the weaknesses identified have only partly been implemented in the action plans. The elaboration process and formulation time of action plans of organic food and farming in these countries and regions varies considerably. The level of stakeholder participation in the action plan development is relatively high in almost all cases, due to the fact that the action plans were often developed by expert groups consisting of different stakeholders. More information see ORGAP website.

What has been achieved in the EU Organic Action Plan

Since its release in June 2004 by the European Council, the European Action Plan for Organic Farming and Food, the European Commission and some EU Research Project have started several activities related to the 21 different actions planned. For some actions there is

however no information available. The ORGAP Project is elaborating an information table with the most relevant activities made related to each action point, explaining also what is planned. In this table we expect to gather comments from stakeholders, related to the impact of these activities in each country. In the next newsletter and on the Website there will be more information put, as soon as the requested information from the Commission will be available.

Information Campaign (Action 1)

In March 2005 the first meeting on an information campaign was held in Brussels. Member State delegates presented an overview of their national campaigns, their views on the implementation of Action 1, which was considered as a rather small but important tool to be used in a complementary way with private and national campaigns. Several documents were shared among the participants. In the meantime a proposal was launched for a project in autumn 2006. Currently the EU is evaluating the submissions.

EU OAP: Proposal for the revision of the EU Regulation 2092/91

On the 21st of December 2005 the EU commission has published a new draft proposal for a restructured EU council regulation with a list of basic principles of organic agriculture. This revision is affecting 9 Actions of the EU OAP Two proposals on new rules for organic production & labelling were briefly outlined by Commissioner Fischer Boel, with the Presidency deliberately avoiding any reactions from Ministers, saving the debate for a subsequent meeting. In the Commission proposal (link to www.orgap.org), detailed rules for regional flexibility need still to be further elaborated on an Annex level, e.g. list of additives and processing aids for processing, environment management rules. Some deadlines for derogations will be considered when the revision of the Annexes starts.

Stakeholder's reactions to EU OAP: Revision of EU Regulation others

Different reactions to the EU Regulation Revision proposal of the European Commission from different stakeholders (organic, not organic and individuals) has been published. Most of them are being collected, and will be systematized and analysed in a scientific way by the ORGAP Project in order to evaluate the synergies and conflicts in the area of the European OAP.

News from National Action Plans in the EU

Andalusia, Spain. 6 February 2006. - The Organic surface in Andalusia has increased a 23, 5% in year 2005 and now has 403.361ha. This development in a difficult climatic year for agriculture, was possible thanks to the Regional Organic Action Plan (2002-2006), devoting 16, 7 Mio Euros for this sector. Andalusia is also the region in Spain with a high organic

consumption rates. Priorities for the next Organic Action Plan will be to increase organic farming in Natural Parks and Protected Areas. More information in Spanish can be found at <http://andaluciajunta.es/aj-not-.html?idNot=93165&idCanal=214423>

Involving stakeholders in National Organic Actions Plans

Andalusia Organic Action Plan structures.- The Andalusian Organic Action Plan (AOAP) has created in June 2003, an Advisory Council, named CAPE (Consejo Andaluz de la Producción Ecológica), to follow-up the actions, evaluate the effects of the AOAP and to make proposals for changes or modifications in the implementation. The CAPE chaired by the Regional Andalusian Agriculture Minister, meets twice a year. All Agricultural stakeholders interested in organic food and farming development is represented in the CAPE. Additionally Working Groups have been created for certain areas. Last year one special Expert Group was also created to advice the formulation a new action Plan starting in 2007. More detailed information: M. Ramos E-Mail: maria.ramos.ext@juntadeandalucia.es

ORGAP Forum

ORGAP electronic Forum was launched in July 2005. The first selected topic was "Evaluation methodology for Actions Plans", moderated by Johannes Michelsen from Denmark. There are 33 persons registered. One document has been posted up "Evaluation methodologies" (Stolze, M.; Schmid, O.; Eichert, C.; Stolz, H., 2005) and several questions were made. The Forum has been viewed 66 times, until now. More topics will be put for discussion in future. You can easy register at <http://www.orgap.org/forum/index.php>

Upcoming events in ORGAP project

ORGAP Advisory Committee meeting is planned for 29th May 2006 at the Organic Congress in Odense (Denmark), to approve the ORGAPET and advice other activities

National workshops will be organized in eight countries from 1st March and mid of April 2006, as a process of stakeholders consultation to review the proposed structure and indicators of ORGAPET, the evaluation toolbox developed in the Project

Focus Group discussion with national representatives in the IFOAM EU Group, will take place in Slovenia at the end of March 2006, organized by FiBL, a broader involvement of other countries not covered by the partnership, for the same purpose.

ORGAP Project Steering Committee. Next meeting will be held in Aberystwyth (Wales), at the End of September 2006.

ORGAP Project Documents

Comparative Documentation of Action Plans for Organic Agriculture (WP 3.1). Final Draft (Stoll, H.; Stolze, M., Schmid, O. May 2006) 116p.

Other relevant events

Joint Organic Congress, Odense (Denmark). On the 30th-31st of May 2006 ORGAP will take part in a joint organic congress. The congress will combine public meeting to be held in EU supported organic research projects and the biannual Danish congress, which usually attracts more than 600 participants.

Among others the congress will examine the potential impact of Organic Food and Farming Actions Plans to the development of agriculture and food production, rural development and environmental protection in the enlarged Europe. The congress will take place in Odense Congress Centre, the popular venue for the Danish congress. The city of Odense is situated on Funen, with direct train from the international airport in Copenhagen. Further information on the joint organic congress can be obtained from the congress homepage: www.organic-congress.org

Contacts

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