

BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE  
**ITALIAN NETWORK FOR THE RESEARCH IN ORGANIC FARMING**  
**INROF**

Downstream of a very successful conference on "[Knowledge Advancement and Organic Farming](#)", held on April 16 2008 in Rome, a meeting between researchers and stakeholders allowed to put the basis for an Italian Network for the Research in Organic Farming and to constitute the first six [Thematic Working Groups](#) - TWGs - (now they are eight) covering different topics: Biodiversity, Energy, Plant Protection, Quality, Agricultural Techniques and Organic Animal Production.

The Groups are co-ordinated by experts coming from the National Research Council (CNR), the Council for Research and experimentation in Agriculture (CRA), the Italian Association for Organic Agriculture (AIAB), the National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and the Environment (ENEA), the National Research Institute for Food and Nutrition (INRAN), the Regional Agency for Development and Innovation in Agriculture of Tuscany (ARSIA); the Research Centre for Crop Production of Emilia Romagna Region (CRPV).

On 28 May 2008, the Co-ordinators of TWGs held their first meeting during which a high level of interest in the Groups was reported. Indeed, in just one month, around 140 Italian scientists and experts of different institutions joined the TWGs ([Statistics](#)), demonstrating the diffused awareness of the need of a national Network. This calls for defining common working rules for TWGs and a more effective organisational structure. To ensure this, [Guidelines](#) for TWGs were issued and a [Committee](#) composed by the Co-ordinators was set up. The Committee takes decisions on strategic and operational matters in order to ensure that TWGs act with the aim of spreading scientific research, technological development and cooperation between researchers and stakeholders in the field of organic farming in Italy.

On 23 September 2008, the first meeting of the Committee has been held. During the meeting, among other, the complete structure of the Committee was defined, a new TWG in Organic Food Production was approved and a discussion on the importance in supporting the European Technology Platform "Organics" has taken place.