



Pre-announcement and preliminary program

International meeting on the use of organic seeds in vegetable production

(improvement of the seed offer – harmonisation of regulation
management)

**Location: Bejo Zaden, Trambaan 1, 1749 CZ Warmenhuizen
in the Netherlands
28.-29. September 2006**

Background for the meeting

In Denmark, as in other EU countries the experience of many growers shows an inconsistent management of the organic seed legislation and possibilities for derogation, especially concerning vegetable varieties. Differences concerning the interpretation of implementation of the European Organic Farming Regulation (concerning seeds) between countries lead to unfair competition among growers, for instance on export markets. This, in turn, may hinder the further development in the production and use of organic seeds in European countries.

To ensure that there is compliance with the rules in the individual European countries, we consider it worthwhile to arrange a joint meeting for growers, scientists, advisors and representatives from the official bodies/departments administering the rules in the individual countries.

To attain as large a participation as possible, we have welcomed the offer of the seed company Bejo Zaden to host the meeting during their "open day's event".

The meeting will also give the participants a possibility to meet colleagues from abroad and to visit Bejo's organic test plots in the field showing their assortment of varieties from organic seeds together with some organic varieties from other seed companies.

Participants

- Farmers and vegetable growers (especially those who represent regional or national groups/organisations).
- Seed companies involved in organic seed production
- Advisors/scientists
- The official control bodies/departments managing the derogation system
- Representatives from the National Ministries
- Representatives from the EU Commission

Invitation and registration

All EU and EFTA countries are invited, but to be able to discuss matters we have set a limit to the number of participants (80). The responsibility and coordination for the invitations per country lies nationally by the national contact persons mentioned in attached list. If you are interested to participate, please contact the contact person.

Participants of the same country will be asked to give a joint presentation concerning the aims of the meeting.

Ambition for the meeting

- To identify realistic opportunities to use organic seed in the production of vegetables
- To identify the reasons for the difficulties in using organic seeds and making suggestions on how to solve them
- To secure compliance in managing the rules, hereby also the way in which derogations are given in the different countries
- The possibility to meet colleagues from other countries
- To create a common focus for all players involved in this area

Organisation

The meeting is jointly organised by :

- European Consortium for Organic Plant Breeding (ECO-PB) – Edith Lammerts van Bueren (NL)
- Fruit and Vegetable Advisory Service Denmark - Ole Bloch Engelbrecht (DK)
- EU-funded Organic Revision project (www.organic-revision.org)– Cristina Micheloni (I)

Language

The official meeting language will be English.

Location and time

Bejo Zaden has offered to host the meeting at their Bejo head office in Warmenhuizen. This is 45 minutes from Amsterdam/Schiphol airport.

The meeting starts the 28. September 2006 13.00 o'clock and ends at 13.00 o'clock on the 29. September 2006. The program includes a visit to the Bejo organic variety trial fields.

Accommodation (single rooms) are reserved at a local hotel for approx. 85 euro, including breakfast. There is also a possibility to camp at a local organic farm.

Costs

Details on costs will be communicated as soon as possible. Participants are requested to cover their own travel and accommodation expenses.

Registration

Registration will soon be possible on-line, see www.eco-pb.org. Deadline for registration: 1 September 2006.

Extra excursion: on Friday 29 September afternoon there is a possibility to visit the organic seed company Vitalis Organic Seeds in Voorst, The Netherlands (www.vitalis.eu). More details will follow.

Preliminary Program

Thursday 28 September

13.00 - 15.30 Welcome, introduction and field visit to the variety trials at Bejo Zaden – Warmenhuizen

16.00- 19.30 Presentations on:

- How are the rules complied in the different countries?
- Presentation on the Danish project - by Inger Bertelsen/DK
- Presentation on the evaluation of the Nationals Reports 2004/5 by Andy Thommen/FiBL-CH (Organic Revision project)

- Presentations by seed companies (to be invited)
 - o What is the additional price for organic seed in the main vegetable crops?
 - o In which quality is organic seed delivered (e.g. germination percent, germination power, seed-diseases)
 - o Security of supply – can suppliers deliver every year
 - o How fast is the newest variety available as organic seeds?
 - o How do seed companies divide the individual seed lots between countries
 - o issues related to availability of the seeds over EU Regions

- Teamwork with 8 -10 participants in each group. Each group is given a chairman and a speaker. The following questions have to be discussed within the working groups:
 - o How do you as growers experience the management of the rules in your countries?
 - o What condition should be fulfilled to make you use organic seeds?
 - o Your suggestions and ideas to how the future managing of organic seed should be? Prioritize your suggestions.

20.00 common diner

Friday 29 September

8.30 – 12.00

- Presentation from the EU Commission (to be invited)
- Continued group discussion and plenary discussion on the arrangements for future steps to be realised on EU and national level.

12.00 -13.00 Conclusions and further steps/actions.