



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Template Version 2.09

Voluntary Report - public distribution

Date: 10/19/2004

GAIN Report Number: E34075

EU-25

Organic Products

European Council adopts Organic Action Plan

2004

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Report Highlights:

On October 18, 2004, the European Council unanimously adopted the new EU Action Plan for Organic Farming.

The EU agriculture ministers requested the Commission to implement the program without delay.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Brussels USEU [BE2]
[E3]

On October 18, 2004 the European Council, comprising agriculture ministers from the 25 Member States, unanimously adopted the new "European Action Plan for organic food and farming" which was published last June.

The plan was proposed by the European Commission and consists of 21 items focused on developing the organic market through information, more effective government policy on organic farming and improvement of standards, controls and research.

The member states view the organic Action Plan as a major step forward. Their agriculture ministers requested the Commission to implement this program without delay, and to advance the implementation of the Action Plan on the basis of concrete measures so as to simplify and improve the organic sector.

Support was given to all 21 items. The most important are:

- Information, campaigns and making use of the EU logo to increase consumer awareness.
- Improved analysis and statistics in the sector.
- Optimization of the integration of organic farming into the programs for rural development.
- Strengthening of research.
- Definition of basic principles.
- Completion of continued harmonization of the standards.
- Clarification of GMO-related matters.
- Adjustment of control regulations and improvement of cooperation between control agencies.
- Implementation of measures to facilitate trade. Particularly facilitating the access of developing countries to the market.

As an Annex to the Council Conclusions is a declaration by ten of the member states, asking the Commission to take appropriate initiatives with respect to the thresholds for seeds in order to ensure GMO-free production, and stressing the importance attached to the co-existence of organic and GM-crops.

More information about the Action Plan can be found in GAIN-report [E34025](#).

The Action Plan and Commission Working Documents providing background analysis on the 21 action items can be downloaded from:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/qual/organic/plan/index_en.htm

Visit our website: our website www.useu.be/agri/usda.html provides a broad range of useful information on EU import rules and food laws and allows easy access to USEU reports, trade information and other practical information. More information on organic products can be found at: www.useu.be/agri/organic.html.

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Related reports from USEU Brussels:

Report Number	Title	Date Released
E34025	European Action Plan on Organic Food and Farming	6/21/2004
E24024	European Hearing on Organic Food and Farming	4/6/2004
E23248	Council Conclusions on the EU Organic Action Plan	12/18/2003
E23174	EU Action Plan for Organic Farming – Online Consultation Results	9/15/2003
E23020	EU Action Plan for Organic Farming	2/11/2003
These reports can be accessed through our website www.useu.be/agri or through the FAS website http://www.fas.usda.gov/scripts/attacherep/default.asp .		