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Organic Products

EU Action Plan for Organic Farming - Online Consultation Results

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Report Highlights:

The European Commission recently published a report summarizing the results of a 6-week online consultation on organic farming.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Brussels USEU [BE2]
[E2]

EU Action Plan for Organic Farming – On-line Consultation Results

The European Commission is in the process of developing an EU Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming. In February 2003, a 6-week on-line consultation was posted on the Internet inviting interested parties to rank 12 issues by their perception of importance and to submit additional comments on these issues. The 12 issues contained in the questionnaire were:

- 1) **Marketing:** developing and facilitating various systems for organic produce sales.
- 2) **Targeting:** targeting organic farming to environmentally sensitive areas.
- 3) **Adviser Service:** encouraging the exchange of technical information between farmers.
- 4) **CAP:** ensuring that the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) supports the development of organic farming.
- 5) **Traceability:** ensuring Traceability and organic food authenticity.
- 6) **Logo:** reinforce the use of the EU organic logo
- 7) **Private standards:** the access to information on additional inspection requirements where they exist.
- 8) **Testing methods:** the harmonization of testing methods, control procedures, supervision and accreditation together with efficient co-operation between all actors involved in the inspection system, including Community inspections.
- 9) **Import:** the implementation of appropriate standardized procedures to ensure that imported products respect both fair competition with EU products and EU commitments regarding developing countries.
- 10) **Standards:** the establishment of a body for delivering independent, excellent and transparent advice on which production methods, substances, etc., can be accepted in order to assure conformity with the principles of organic farming.
- 11) **Statistical data:** the collection and communication of official statistical data on production, consumption and trade on a more permanent basis.
- 12) **Research:** the effective funding of research in organic farming from the point of view of food safety and quality, including expanding research into the development of new products and processing methods and the environmental sustainability of organic farming, and into comparison studies between organic and conventional food.

The European Commission recently published a report summarizing the results of the on-line consultation. 1136 citizens and organizations participated in the on-line consultation of which 45 percent were consumers, 12 percent farmers, 11 percent national organizations, 9 percent advisors, 3 percent traders, 3 percent international organizations, 2 percent processors and 9 percent others. The consultation was open for all countries but most replies came from France (23 percent), Austria (14 percent), Italy (13 percent) and Germany (11 percent).

The full report can be downloaded from the Internet at
http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/qual/organic/plan/result_en.pdf.

Issues ranked by importance (% of total number of respondents):

Issue	Very important	Important	Not important	To be avoided
1) Marketing	71.3	21	5.1	2.7
2) Targeting	52.1	29.8	10.2	7.9
3) Adviser Service	64.2	31.4	3.5	0.9
4) CAP	80.1	12.7	3.7	3.4
5) Traceability	75.2	22	2.4	0.4
6) EU logo	24.3	33.8	34.9	7
7) Private standards	29.9	51.5	13.4	5.3
8) Testing methods	62.1	31.7	4.1	2.2
9) Import	64.6	28.8	4.3	2.3
10) Standards	44.8	41.4	8.9	4.9
11) Statistical data	26.4	52	19.8	1.7
12) Research	69.3	23.6	4.7	2.4

Number of replies from different countries:

Country	Number of replies	Percent of total
France	261	23
Austria	159	14
Italy	143	12.6
Germany	124	10.9
Belgium	79	7
U.K.	71	6.3
Spain	63	5.5
Sweden	44	3.9
Denmark	43	3.8
Netherlands	34	3
Finland	18	1.6
Luxembourg	13	1.1
Portugal	10	0.9
Greece	9	0.8
EU Accession countries	28	2.5
Switzerland	9	0.8
Ireland	4	0.4
Norway	4	0.4
Other countries	8	0.7

The European Commission will prepare the final Action Plan in the form of a Communication to the European Council and Parliament. The Plan, expected by early 2004, will include a list of possible actions intended to facilitate the development of organic farming.

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Report Number	Title	Date Released
E23020	EU Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming	2/14/2003