

Information Letter for Organic Agriculture of Central and Eastern Europe

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development in
vulnerable agricultural
areas

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Dear readers,

we are happy to present our new Information Letter to you. A lot has happened since our last issue and we want to cover the most important and interesting news in this edition.

Perhaps the most important news we have for you is about the global organic label launched by IFOAM. With this new label it will be possible for consumers to recognize organic products all around the globe. However, it is an open question how this new label can be used in a valuable way along with the obligatory organic EU label.

Last May the annual Organic Marketing Forum in Warsaw successfully took place for the sixth time. More than 30 % growth of the exhibition space was recorded and for the first time it was made CO₂ neutral.

We also want to tell you about several small-scale initiatives that have potential to make a great contribution to organic agriculture. Our stories about a beekeeping project in Germany, an organic shop in Romania and milk production in Armenia are inspiring examples of local actions with international scope.

We have always kept you up-to-date about the GMO situation in Europe. This time we have very optimistic news. In July the European Parliament adopted a decision on the possibility for Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory and strongly supported the right of EU citizens to stay GMO free.

We hope you enjoy reading our articles,

Katja Bykova & Bernhard Jansen, EkoConnect

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**EKOconnect**
Organic Agriculture Moving East

**avalon**

1. Experiences with organic cultivation of soy beans in northern Germany and northern Europe

The soy bean is an important source of protein for feeding animals on organic animal farms. It is also of interest to crop farms as a nitrogen-fixing plant with a shorter break in its growing cycle than some types of peas and lupine, for example.



Photo: University Arhaus

There are many problems with genetically modified soy beans currently on the market, including the trend of rising prices for soy products. Up to now, it was believed that soy beans needed high temperatures for cultivation and therefore were only grown in southern Germany and southern Europe (Italy, France, Austria). Recently, experts from Niedersachsen (www.lwk-niedersachsen.de) investigated the feasibility of cultivating organic soy beans in the northern part of Germany as well. The cultivation in Denmark (www.agrsci.au.dk/sojabonner) and Switzerland (www.raumberg-gumpenstein.at) has also been examined.

The demands of the soy bean in regards to climate and location can be described in the following way. The beans need soil which warms easily and evenly, without areas of cold air, a sum of temperature (the sum of daily average temperature from sowing till harvest) of at least approx. 1450°C, no temperature lower than 6°C, no rocky ground, a low incidence of pest plants and an optimal pH-value of 6-7. Soy beans grow well if planted after winter grains but should not be grown after summer grain or potatoes (according to Baumert, Naturland Feb. 2011). After sunflower or canola has been cultivated there should be a break of 4 years.

For cultivation in northern or perched high areas, the varieties used must be precocious (flower earlier than usual) and highly resistant to cold. A good example for such a variety is "Fiskeby V" by the breeder Holmberg from Sweden. In the experiment in Niedersachsen the "Merlin" variety performed the best, with "Protina" also growing adequately for use as animal feed.

Soy beans usually contain approx. 30-45 % protein and 15-25 % oil. In the experiments in Denmark conducted in 2008-2010, 1.5-2.0 t/ha were harvested with a concentration of 40-42 % protein and 16-18 % oil. In Niedersachsen in 2009, 2t/ha were harvested on average, with 40 % protein and an oil concentration of 19 %. In the 2010, the harvest was disappointing; just 1.2 t due to disadvantageous weather conditions (it was very cold in May with a lot of rain) and the bad development of bacilli absorbing nitrogen (rhizobia). The concentration of protein in this harvest was 30 % on average, but the concentration of oil corresponded with the harvest of 2009.

The biggest problem with the cultivation of soy beans is their low ability to compete with pest plants so mechanical means must be applied for the weed control. In Niedersachsen, the efficiency of different types of weed control has been tested. The most successful was a method called "Flachhäufel" in which a small heap of soil is piled on either side of the row of soy beans and covers the pest plants this way. To make the "Flachhäufel" work effectively, a distance of 40 cm between the rows is necessary instead of the usual 12 cm. In Denmark, the bigger distance between the rows augmented the harvest by 0.2-0.4 t. In the stated sources you can also find information about the best techniques for sowing and harvesting.

Baumert (2011): Erfahrungen im Anbau von Sojabohnen 2010. Naturland Fachberatung. www.naturland.de/fileadmin/MDb/documents/Erzeuger/Tagungsbeitraege/Ackerbautagung_2011/2011-A-Baumert-Erfahrungen_Anbau_Sojabohnen_2010.pdf

Mücke; Meyercordt (2010): Versuchsbericht Ökologischer Sojabohnenanbau in Niedersachsen www.lwk-niedersachsen.de/download.cfm/file/346,44ac074b-237d-eebf-5e5c42055e4d88bf~pdf.html

Petersen (2010): Dyrkning af sojabønner i Danmark (Anbau von Sojabohnen in Dänemark). Aarhus University, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences. www.web.agrsci.dk/djfpublikation/djfpdf/gvma333.pdf

Author: Andrea Mühle, EkoConnect

Translation from German: Eugen Bohmke, editing: Kartini Kochar

2. IFOAM launches new global organic logo

Along with organic market growth worldwide the number of organic labels has been growing too, making it more and more complicated for the customer. The reason is that besides national logos there are many private logos which intend to deliver to the consumer some additional specific information about the product's origin or quality. However, only a very small number of organic consumers are interested in the details of the standards or the certification procedure. What they really want to know is that the product has been certified by an approved certifier and that it has been produced according to organic standards.



On 14th February 2011 after six years of discussion IFOAM launched its Organic Guarantee System and the Global Organic Mark. Key elements of that reform are the so called 'Family of Standards', a list of organic good practice standards. It contains all standards officially endorsed as organic by the Organic Movement, based on their equivalence with the Common Objectives and Requirements of Organic Standards. There are already more than 40 members of this "family", both national and private. Among them are the EU Organic Regulation, national organic regulations of Germany, Italy, Hungary, Switzerland, USA, Canada, Turkey, India, China, Israel, Japan, Argentina, etc. and such private standards as Gää, Germany, Bolicert, Bolivia and there are more to join.

Thus, IFOAM is offering the first global organic product logo. The mark can be used by farmers and the organic processing and trade industry if they fulfil the demanding production requirements of the Organic Movement.

"We are launching a new era" says Katherine DiMatteo, IFOAM President. "The Family of Standards and the Global Organic Mark are outstanding milestones in the history of the Organic Movement. Now, the stakeholders in the market have to recognize the huge potentials of these new tools."

Further information can be found on the IFOAM official web page www.ifoam.org or IFOAM Ecology & Farming magazine nr. 2, April edition www.ecologyandfarming.com

Author: Katja Bykova, EkoConnect, editing: Kathleen Hewlett, Soil Association

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3. Ecological plant breeding for Eastern Europe - Introducing Darzau Cereal Breeding Research Centre

For 20 years Darzau Cereal Breeding Research Centre has been breeding cereal cultivars under organic conditions.



Darzau Cereal Breeding Research Centre is located southeast of Hamburg. Sandy soils are prevalent at the location (<50 soil points (on a scale from zero to 100)). This combined with dry phases recurring every year at various seasons facilitates crop selection for drought stress tolerance. We develop special breeds adapted to organic farming. Selection aims at nutritional efficiency, which means that low inputs return high to very high yields of gluten rich winter wheat. A further criterion is the plant's ability to provide shade for weed suppression. Additional selection criteria include resistance to diseases spread via seeds, resulting in the wheat varieties being resistant to common bunt (*Tilletia caries*) and loose smut (*Ustilago tritici*). Other cereals being developed include population rye (light rye), free-threshing winter and summer barley, malting barley and Einkorn to be planted in autumn as well as free-threshing oats. The latest additions to our breeding programme are winter peas as grain legumes. Due to the strong development of the young plants, winter peas have proved more competitive and less prone to drought stress on light soil than summer peas. Here, we focus on the development of hardy, white flowering grain peas.

As a non-profit organisation, we would like to get in touch with farmers, processors and breeders devoted to organic breeding for organic farming. We also would like to hear of similar projects to exchange information. Further information on our varieties is available at www.darzau.de or by phone at +49 5853-1319. Your contact is Ulrich Quendt.

Author: Ulrich Quendt, Darzau, translation from German: Myriam Bastian, editing: Kathleen Hewlett

4. Educating customers about organic: case study from Romania

As one of the first organic shops in Bucharest, opened in April 2008 by two young mothers Ileana Muntean and Bogdan Ghinescu, Pukka Food is about more than just selling organic products. Through innovative activities aimed at its customers, Pukka Food tries to spread information about organic and healthy food to the wider public.



Running an organic business in Romania is still challenging and Ileana Muntean, who has managed the shop alone since 2010, says, "Romanians are not often prepared to pay the price for healthy living". Nevertheless, she makes an effort to educate her clients: "We organise tastings and discussions, participate in fairs. This year we have organised a raw cooking class and some raw desserts demos in schools and kindergartens".

Additionally, Pukka Food is also a partner of the Metabolic Balance program. This program, which is defined as a "nutritional programme for weight management and well-being" has been designed by doctors and scientists in order to raise awareness in the field of nutrition and give practical advice. For Ileana Muntean this collaboration is a logical extension of her sales activities: "We are providing information about this program to the clients who are interested and our partner from the Metabolic Balance program recommends our products because organic food is an important component of their system."

The shop has an info corner where clients can learn about products, a small library, website, Facebook account, and newsletter. Shop assistants provide information to clients about new products or green issues in general, either directly or via special brochures which are available at the info corner.

A few weeks ago, Pukka Food launched an on-line shop. The best sellers are mostly local products, such as apple juice made in Malincrav and Transylvanian buffalo feta, or special products which are not easy to find, like coconut milk and quinoa. In order to have better prices for foreign products, 40% of imports are bought directly from producers.

www.pukkafood.ro

Author: Sadia Robein, EkoConnect, editing: Kathleen Hewlett, Soil Association

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5. The cow as climate-killer???

It's not the cow, but industrial agriculture that threatens the global climate!

In her recently published book Anita Idel defends cattle. In a professional yet fond manner she reports about buffaloes in Brandenburg, wisents in Northrhine-Westfalia and Nguni-cattle in Namibia. And most notably she presents fact-based, detailed arguments as to why cattle are not responsible for the global climate disaster.

In recent years, due to their emission of methane, cattle have been repeatedly presented as major culprits in climate change. In her book Anita Idel explains why cattle per se can not be blamed as climate damaging and raises questions concerning intensive cattle farming. If cattle are kept in sustainable grazing management they do not contribute to climate change - in contrast they can actually reduce the emission of greenhouse gases. The reason for this is that grassland - accounting for 40% of the land area - stores a great deal of carbon in the form of humus. Each ton of humus in the ground is essentially taking 1.8 tons of carbon out of the atmosphere by storing in the soil. Sustainable grazing management has a higher CO₂-storage capacity than all the other forms of land cultivation. In contrast to man, cattle are able to digest cellulosic plant matter and convert it into milk and beef. However, additional feeding with soy and cereals means that this benefit is lost and puts them in direct competition with man for grain-based food. The intensive application of concentrated feeding stuffs, the synthetic



www.anita-idel.de

fertiliser used for it, the clearing of the rain forests and the conversion of grassland into cropland are the real culprits in accelerating climatic change.

In her book Anita Idel criticizes the FAO-study concerning the consumption of meat published in 2006, "Livestock's Long Shadow". Furthermore she rejects all the commonly presented arguments for intensification as increasing milk production per unit of carbon "The authors didn't pay attention to different production systems and level of intensiveness, but reasonable conclusions can only be drawn if you know what resource input was required for what output." A higher output can only be achieved by greater use of concentrated feed, which uses up resources and releases carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide in its production. She points out that the calculation doesn't consider how intensively the feed is produced and the lifespan of the cow. Dairy cows fed with concentrates and pushed to produce high yields of milk have shorter productive lives and a larger number of unproductive young animals have to be kept to replace them.

Not least, sustainable grazing management is a animal friendly system. Anita Idel describes the co-existence of man and animal, "Low Stress Stockmanship", a method of gentle handling of cattle and finally the respectful killing – the shot on the pasture. "You need be neither an animal rights activist nor meat eater nor both at the same time to understand that there's no more gentle kind of anaesthesia than the pasture and an absolutely sudden shot hitting the animal to be slaughtered – at its best if the animal's lying down: no trapping and loading, no transport and unloading, no stress in the slaughterhouse, but simply – bang." It is a brave book worth reading.

Dr. Anita Idel is a veterinarian and was lead author of the global agro-report from 2005 until 2008. She is a co-founder of the workshop critical veterinary medicine, of the genetic network and of the society for ecologic animal husbandry. She has a lectureship at the University of Kassel and works as a mediator.

Anita Idel: Die Kuh ist kein Klima-Killer. Metropolis Verlag, 200 pages. Reference number: 978-3-89518820-6. 18.00 Euro. At the moment the book is published only in German, but an English version is going to be available in autumn.

Author: Nora Petzold, EkoConnect

Translation from German: Eugen Bohmke, editing: Kathleen Hewlett, Soil Association

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6. 6th Organic Marketing Forum in Warsaw with more exhibiting space

„Organic and Communication – Together Successful“ was the motto when market stakeholders of nearly 30 countries met in Warsaw for the sixth time. While the event showed a stable number of participants, the number of exhibitors has risen considerably. The meeting demonstrated in an impressive manner why organic agriculture must be an important part of future politics, and made it clear that the organic market in the East of Europe is developing dynamically. The sixth Organic Marketing Forum (OMF) was the first CO₂ neutral one.



www.organic-marketing-forum.org

„The significance of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) for the organic sector is continuously growing. On one side CEE offers a market for organic products. On the other side its importance as a supplier of raw materials is strongly increasing, and the offer of high quality organic products in the brand range as well as on the level of private labels is being extended“, Bernhard Jansen, director of the organizer EkoConnect - International Centre for Organic Agriculture of Central and Eastern Europe e. V. sums up his impressions of the 6th Organic Marketing Forum in Warsaw. The two-day international event for producers, processors and marketers of organic products and raw materials took place the 26th and 27th of May in the Polish capital. The response matched last year's level with approx. 370 participants from 27 countries. The exhibition area and number of stands grew significantly by about one third.

Amongst the exhibitors there were also group stands from Poland, Austria and Germany. Also, for the first time a federation of several Central-Asian Associations represented the organic sector in their region. A growing number of visitors and exhibitors came from Russian-speaking countries. "The good

atmosphere at the Forum, as well as the catering and tasting activities of the Polish Agricultural Minister in collaboration with the Polish association Polska Ekologia, show that the positive development of organic agriculture in Poland is moving forward. The whole organic market in Eastern Europe is in a dynamic development phase", Bernhard Jansen says.

„There will be no success without organic“ was the theme of the opening presentation of Felix Prinz zu Löwenstein (BöLW). He pointed out that world hunger cannot be fought by genetic engineering nor with the input of more production equipment, but only by traditional farmer's agriculture, organic farming and changed consumer behaviour. Diverse contributions about marketing and management on all levels of the supply chain, particularly the highly informative contributions from single CEE countries like Russia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland, as well as the topics related to specific subjects, met with great interest from participants. Additionally knowledge and approaches to sustainability and the use of media were discussed in workshops, and it was possible to attend a school lesson about healthy food together with local pupils. The final presentation from the companies Bioconcept-Gardenia from Poland and Ariza from the Netherlands pointed out the great opportunities offered by a long-term East-West collaboration in an impressive manner. Respect and trust between partners can have a very positive influence on the economy.

In the concluding competition „Best of Organic“ the company LaSelva (Italy) won the 1st prize. The other prizes were given to Bio Planet (Poland) and Voelkel (Germany).

To put sustainability principles into practice, EkoConnect organised OMF 2011 as the first carbon neutral one. With the support of Soil and More from the Netherlands, the CO2 footprint of the event in Poland will be offset by a composting project at the SEKEM farm in Egypt. With the ongoing support of Soil and More and SEKEM, EkoConnect will continue this initiative for future OMF.

The patrons of the Organic Marketing Forum were the Polish Ministry of Agriculture and the IFOAM EU Group. EkoConnect organised the Forum in co-operation with the Polish Association Ekoland, the state advisory service for agriculture in Poland (CDR), Polska Ekologia and the Organic Retailers Association.

More information is available at www.organic-marketing-forum.org.

Author: Hans-Josef Brzukalla, EkoConnect, editing: Kathleen Hewlett, Soil Association

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7. Sustainable organic milk production in Armenia

The demand for organic products is not only growing in North America, Asia and Europe but also in many smaller, less-developed countries. Armenia is one of them.

Armenia's food processing sector is growing fast, and its export potential is great, being based on agri-products produced in an ecological way and in excellent climatic conditions. Since 1995 food processing has been one of Armenia's biggest industries. Due to the fact that Armenian farmers generally use very low quantities of chemical inputs, Armenia has great potential for "Organic Farming".



Photo: University of Kassel

One of the most promising sectors is dairy. At present, there are about 38 milk processing centres in Armenia producing conventional dairy products. However, milk production and processing capacity in Armenia could be increased further in order to meet both domestic and export demand (e.g. to Georgia).

Armenian State Agrarian University (ASAU), in close collaboration with University of Kassel (Dep. Organic Food Quality and Food Culture) Germany, developed a plan for the teaching-experimental organic dairy farm "Balahovit" situated in the north-eastern part of Kotayk Region 1500 m above the sea level

The dairy building was re-constructed and renovated according to European standards, dairy processing facilities and machinery were sponsored and brought to Armenia, so that students at ASAU can see and learn modern milk processing. A quality control laboratory was established within the Masters Programme in Applied Biosciences

The project team took into account energy and water saving during milk processing and introduced the HACCP system at the processing unit. It's also planned that in the near future the dairy will be equipped with solar panels to provide hot water to production area and biological cleaning systems will be introduced for the dairy products residues. These technologies will help the university dairy act as a model dairy for the other similar producers in the country and in the region.

The university dairy has started with 6-7 different organic dairy products: sour-cream, matsun, milk, tan (ayran), curd and cheese ("Lori" and "Chanakh"). Continuous and sustainable production is planned, first of all for education purposes, as well as for extension services.

Further aims of this project include reducing the demand for imports, whilst establishing the export of organic milk products.

Project managers: Prof. Dr. agr. Angelika Ploeger and Dipl. Ing. Sonika Aminforoughi, University of Kassel, Department of Organic Food Quality and Food Culture (www.uni-kassel.de/agrar/nuee/?language=en).

Author: Katja Bykova, EkoConnect, editing: Kathleen Hewlett, Soil Association

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8. Bees are looking for farmers

At a time when CCD (Colony Collapse Disorder) threatens to create a decline of biodiversity and an economic crisis in farming – which depends completely on the activity of pollinating insects – the German Gää association has launched an Internet platform for beekeepers and farmers.

The bee platform project was developed last summer as a result of a dialogue between Gää and beekeepers. It provides an opportunity for beekeepers and organic farmers to find each other and to exchange information and experiences. This is done by an online index of farmers and beekeepers and



Photo: Gää e.V.

through a possibility to insert information and post texts. "It is hard for beekeepers to find a terrain for hives which are far enough from fields sprayed with insecticides and other chemical products which are forbidden in organic farming and beekeeping. On the other hand, production of fruit and crops such as rape depend on bees' pollination so this kind of platform can also be interesting for farmers who are looking for beekeepers" explains Freia Böhm from Gää, who is responsible for the project implementation. An online index of beekeepers and organic farmers with an opportunity to exchange experiences can assist them in establishing contacts with each other.

Using the platform is very simple. After filling in a special online form and choosing an appropriate type of field, "search" or "offer", a beekeeper or farmer can complete his profile and use the index according to the chosen categories.

The platform was launched at the beginning of this summer. Although its scope is regional for the moment (only farmers from Saxony are represented), they aim to extend it to cover the whole of Germany. While it is addressed to all beekeepers, it requires the farmers to be certified by Gää. Freia Böhm explains: „In the future, we plan to make it accessible to other organic farmers.”

More information about Gää association can be found at www.gaea.de and the internet platform for beekeepers and farmers can be viewed here: www.imker.gaea.de

Author: Sadia Robein, EkoConnect, editing: Kathleen Hewlett, Soil Association

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9. “Pig business” stands for organic meat

Due to the January scandal in Germany over the cancer-causing dioxin that was found in pig and chicken feed, the *Pig Business* movie by Tracy Worcester launched in 2009 gained a new wave of attention.

In her movie Tracy Worcester strongly criticizes intensive pig farming providing a great number of arguments against it: ethical, social, financial, political, etc. Besides being simply cruel to animals, large meat producers obstruct consumers' right for healthy food and put small farmers into conditions in which it is hard for them to survive. Tracy Worcester and an alliance of MEPs (Members of the European Parliament)



Photo: Janne Brodin

present evidence that European taxpayers are subsidising industrial farming, therefore squeezing out more responsible, smaller-scale farms. In the movie it is also shown that huge pork processors go to Eastern Europe where the standards are lower and labour and resources are cheaper. A large part of “Pig Business” is shot in Poland, where the world's largest pork processor, Smithfield Foods has established its factories.

The movie provides important information and footage about today meat production. However, since it is not without problematic arguments everybody should form their own opinion: “Pig Business” can be watched online for free at the official web page: www.pigbusiness.co.uk. The movie languages are English and Polish with different subtitles available including German, Hungarian, Romanian, Ukrainian, Russian, Slovenian, etc.

Author: Katja Bykova, EkoConnect, editing: Kathleen Hewlett, Soil Association

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Helmy Abouleish from Egypt is free again and back at SEKEM

Helmy Abouleish was the planned keynote speaker at the Organic Marketing Forum 2011 in Warsaw. He had to cancel his attendance because he was detained in prison for nearly 100 days after the revolution in Egypt. We are happy to inform that Helmy Abouleish has been released from detention and back at SEKEM after his hearing in court on 5th July, 2011.

For more information, please follow the link www.facebook.com/sekemgroup?ref=ts

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COMMUNICATION IS MARKETING

10. Upcoming Events 2011

| Date | Place | Event | Topic | Link/contact |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
| 06.09. – 07.09. | Saxony, Goerlitz area | Seminar within the EU Ziel3-Project „Lower Silesian-Saxonian Academy for Agriculture and Environmental Protection“ | Topics: Direct Marketing, regional and rural initiatives, Networking amongst the actors from German and Polish side Languages: German and Polish | www.ekoconnect.org |
| 07.09. | Valence, France | Bio'n Days: Organic agriculture trade show on the protection, extraction and commerce of organic and natural products | Topics: Valorisation of technical byproduct of organic food, cosmetics, textile and non-food. The goal of the conference is to inform about new technologies to valorise "waste" and to develop cooperation between technical centres and companies at European level. | www.biondays.com |
| 16.09. - 18.09. | Zakynthos, Greece | International conference "Organic Agriculture and Agro-Eco Tourism in the Mediterranean" | The aim of the IC is to improve scientific dialogues, implementation of information exchange, and dissemination transfer of knowledge and innovation strategies on organic agriculture for Mediterranean climate. | www.abmconference2011.org |
| 20.09. -- 21.09. | Dolnoslaski e, Poland | Seminar within the Ziel3-Project „Lower Silesian-Saxonian Academy for Agriculture and Environmental Protection“ | 2- day seminar „Renewable Energies“ Languages: Polish, German | www.dodr.pl |
| 21.09. – 24.09. | Belgrad, Serbia | 2 nd BioBalkan Expo 2011 | Organic Foods, Processing Machinery and Equipment for Organic Agriculture, Organic Cosmetics, Natural Health Care Products, Electronic and Printed Media dedicated to Healthy Living. | www.alexpo.co.rs/2biobalkan2011.html |
| 26.09. - 05.10. | Gyeonggi Paldang, Korea | IFOAM-Organic World Congress and 3rd ISOFAR Conference | The IFOAM-Congress is dealing with practical questions of organic agriculture. For the scientific ISOFAR-Conference with the topic „Organic is Life – Knowledge for Tomorrow“ contributions for all topics of organic agriculture can be submitted. | www.kowc2011.org www.isofar.org |
| 28.09. - 29.09. | Saxony, Germany | Excursion within the EU Ziel3-Project „Lower Silesian-Saxonian Academy for Agriculture and Environmental Protection | Excursion in the region of Oberlausitz | www.smul.sachsen.de/lfulg |
| 28.09.– 30.09. | Belgrad, Serbia | Fine Food fair CULINARIA | It is a meeting place for manufacturers of food and beverages and aimed with its offer at buyers and decision makers from the industry. Exhibitors will have the opportunity to present their products. | www.culinariafinefood.com |
| 02.10. | Augsburg, Germany | BioSüd | Trade fair for specialised organic food trade | www.biosued.de |
| 06.10. | Zgorzelec, Poland | Workshop meeting within the EU Project | Meeting and exchange about organic beekeeping; enhancing new | www.ekoconnect.org |

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|--------------------|--|--|---|--|
| | | „Organic Trade“ | partnerships between German and Polish beekeepers and farmers Languages: Polish and German | |
| 08.10.- 12.10. | Cologne, Germany | Anuga | The world's leading food fair for the retail trade and the food service and catering market | www.anuga.de |
| 11-10.– 15.10. | Dresden, Germany | Workshop „Large scale low input organic milk and meat production and processing“ | The aim is to familiarize participants with requirements, some best practice examples and the chances and limitations of large scale organic low input milk and meat production and processing according to EU law. Workshop language is Russian | www.ekoconnect.org |
| 14.10. - 16.10. | Lodz, Poland | NATURA FOOD | A customer fair for organic, traditional and regional food | www.naturafood.pl |
| 15.10. - 16.10. | Hannover, Germany | BioNord | Trade fair for specialised organic food trade | www.bionord.de |
| 25.10. | Świdnica, Poland | Conference within the EU-Project „Organic trade“ | Organic Agriculture as a future concept for rural areas (in Polish and German) | www.pogranicze-csb.home.pl |
| 27.10. - 30.10. | Waldorf School Hannover Maschsee, Germany | International Conference of the Apprenticeship for Biodynamic Agriculture | The motto of the conference is "Future well rooted". Related topics are: The farm as an individual entity, Forestry, Plant communities, etc. | www.novembertagung.de |
| 04.11. - 06.11. | Athens, Greece | Biologica: Organic trade fair | Topics: The most recent development and trends in terms of organic agriculture, nutrition, ecology and health | www.biocluster.gr |
| 14.11.– 15.11. | Prague, Czech Republic | 3rd International Scientific Conference on Organic Farming | New findings in organic farming research and science for use in the region of Central and Eastern Europe. | www.ctpez.cz |
| 15.11. | Prague, Czech Republic | Biosummit 2011 | “Do the Czech Republic and EU need organic farming and food?” an opportunity for meeting and discussion between politicians, state administration, scientists, researchers, organic food producers, managers and business people. | www.ctpez.cz/biosummiteng.html |
| 17.11. | Poland | Conference within the EU Ziel3-Project „Lower Silesian-Saxonian Academy for Agriculture and Environmental Protection | Topic: Environmental protection in agriculture Languages: Polish and German | www.dodr.pl |
| 25.11. | Görlitz, Germany | Workshop within the EU-Project „Organic trade“ | Management of holdings in situations of change (conversion to organic agriculture, generation change, etc.) Languages: Polish, German | www.gaea.de |
| 06.12.– 07.12. | Dresden, Germany | Excursion within the EU Ziel3-Project „Lower Silesian-Saxonian Academy for Agriculture and Environmental Protection | 2- day Excursion in Saxony: “Environmental Protection by Organic Agriculture”. Lower Silesian farmers visit Saxonian farms Languages: German and Polish | www.ekoconnect.org |

Did you enjoy this information letter?

If yes, please be sure to recommend it to your friends and colleagues. But if you have any comments, critics or other ideas for improvement please send an email to: jolanda.devries@avalon.nl:

This information letter is a joint project of EkoConnect and Avalon and this year it replaces the “EkoConnect – Information letter on Organic Agriculture of Central and Eastern Europe” and the “Avalon Network Newsletter”. If this information letter was forwarded to you and you would like to receive it directly, please send a short e-mail with the subject ‘Subscribe Information Letter’ to redaktion@ekoconnect.org

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Best regards,

Your Editorial Team

Avalon is an international, non-profit organisation, based in the Netherlands and active in promoting organic agriculture. Avalon supports rural communities in the Central and Eastern European region and beyond in building sustainable rural societies. In this way we support nature and environment, social conditions and local economy, always in close cooperation with local organisations such as communities, farmers, governments, etc.

Avalon Network

One of our main goals is to **connect organisations, governments, universities, and associated experts by informing and discussing about organic agriculture and nature conservation**. Knowledge and capacity building as well as market and chain development play an important role in agro-environmental policy programmes. Activities include seminars, training of trainers, demonstration farms, institution development and capacity building projects.

Bringing together all stakeholders results in a vast network of more than 150 actors in the field of organic agriculture, nature conservation, biodiversity and sustainable rural development. This network links people who are active in Avalon projects with each other and with professionals on EU and international level. Avalon facilitates this network by providing communication and capacity building tools.

Membership registration

Do you want to become a **network member**? Please fill out the application form on our website (www.avalon.nl/network). Already a member? Then please invite co-workers, friends or other stakeholders to become a network member.

EkoConnect is a not-for-profit organisation based in Germany which enforces and supports the exchange of information, knowledge and experience in the field of organic agriculture. The organisation serves as a network for people and organisations involved in the organic sector in Western and Eastern Europe in order to meet and interact with each other.

Our primary focus is to **support activities and actors involved with sustainable development and organic agriculture within the Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries**. EkoConnect also promotes rural development and the availability of organic products and foods in those markets. Activities include: being a centralized source of information, knowledge transfer between actors and organizations, networking opportunities and continuing education opportunities such as seminars and field trips and supporting private and public facilities implementing structures for the organic agriculture. EkoConnect and its activities are overseen by an Advisory Board that guides the organization in terms of technical and strategic issues.

Membership registration

EkoConnect members include experts and organisations from all over Europe with years of experience in implementing organic agricultural structures, but also non-experts who are interested in learning or supporting the organic idea. You can help support our work by becoming a **“supporting member”** or as an **“ordinary member”**. Please fill out the application form on our website (www.ekoconnect.org). Already a member? Then please invite co-workers, friends or other stakeholders to become a EkoConnect member
