

Organic farming: organic production and labelling of the products

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The Council adopted Conclusions on organic farming in which it highlighted the importance of an appropriate regulatory framework for the development of this sector.

Among other things, the Council calls on the Member States and the Commission, in accordance with their respective competences, to:

- develop the organic farming sector at an ambitious level by **reviewing the current legal framework**, with a view to improving its usability while providing for a period of stability and certainty;
- continue to reduce to the minimum the **various exceptions** outlined in the regulations, while providing flexibility in the application of the production rules to accommodate the specific circumstances and stage of development of the sector at Member State level;
- strengthen and enhance lines of **communication between all control agencies** and explore ways of further improving the production, presentation and rapid dissemination of relevant information, documentation and data;
- identify and overcome **remaining obstacles** in the legal framework to ensure **fair competition** and the proper functioning of the internal market in organic products;
- encourage the **promotion of the organic sector** and increased consumption of organic produce;
- support **access for developing countries' products** to EU markets where adequate guarantees can be provided that the controls are effective and the organic products meet EU requirements;
- acknowledge the **specific inclusion of organic farming in the current CAP reform proposals** and consider further possibilities for providing financial support for organic production within this framework.

In addition, the Commission is invited to:

- improve the **current mechanisms to facilitate international trade in organic products** and require reciprocity and transparency in any trade agreements;
- in cooperation with Member States, to **assess the feasibility of establishing European electronic import certificates** to facilitate and reinforce the control procedures at EU borders.