



EP VOTE ON ORGANIC  
LEGISLATION PROPOSAL



CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE  
LIMIT FOR TRANS-FATS IN  
FOODS



EP WORKSHOP  
"EAT FOR HEALTH"



VOTE ON NOVEL FOOD  
IN THE EP



# NEWSLETTER

## Dear Members,

In our October Newsletter we share with you the latest news and developments on the **Organic Regulation** and **Novel Food Legislation**, on an European action calling the **Commission to curb trans fats' threat** in the EU and an **important workshop held in the European Parliament** called 'Eat for Health'.

On the last three pages, you will find an overview of **EU projects** and interesting **events**.

We are glad to introduce you our **new SAFE Logo** that as of now will be used on all our communication materials. We hope you like it!

We look forward to hearing back from you as always. Enjoy reading.

Yours,

*Floriana Cimmarusti*  
Secretary General of SAFE

## Vote in the EP on Organic Legislation Proposal

On October 13 2015, a draft report on organic production and labelling of organic products has been voted through by the European Parliament's Agricultural and Rural Development Committee (AGRI).

AGRI committee voted in favour of the text by 33 votes to 4 and 7 abstentions.



Rapporteur **MEP Martin Häusling** (Greens) also obtained the green light for talks with

the Council on a final legislative text by 37 votes in favour, 5 against and 2 abstentions.

The vote turns the page on a series of deadlocks on the Regulation Proposal on organic production and labelling of organic products COM (2014) 180, which was first introduced in March 2014 to review existing Regulation No 834/2007 in the face of exponential demand for organic food in Europe.

The EU's organic market has reportedly quadrupled in the past decade yet production is falling behind as organic farming only represents 6% of total agricultural land area in the union. Through this draft legislation the Commission thus aims to streamline and integrate organic farming legislation to ease entry into the sector and level playing field for farmers.

Furthermore, the Commission move was made in a bid to toughen regulation and regain consumers' trust after a string of organic food scandals hit European markets (e.g. more than 500 tonnes of non organic cereals fraudulently sold as organic in Italy).

### Initial Commission Proposal

The Commission's initial proposed regulation included the following key changes (See SAFE February 2015 Newsletter):

#### Control Systems:

- A decertification threshold whereby pesticides residues above a specific level in organic products would see organic producer decertified;
- Removal of annual inspection to check operator compliance and reinforcement of the risk based approach;
- A new system of group certification for small farmers;
- The regulation of the organic control system by the legislation on official controls on food and feed, which is the

responsibility of the DG Sante of the European Commission.

#### Trade with Third Countries:

- The phase out of equivalence rules and the introduction of compliance with EU standards for third countries.

#### Rules for Organic production:

- Requirement for organic enterprises to develop a system for improving their environmental performance;
- Organic farmers having to be exclusively organic after a short period of conversion;
- Provision of livestock with organic feed composed of agricultural ingredients from the farm or sourced from within 150km (93 miles).

Reception of the revised legislative package however has been mixed with third country trading rules, pesticide thresholds and risk based only controls proving particularly contentious throughout the legislative process. Among the European Council, the European Parliament, the organic industry and other stakeholders, opinions have been sharply divided between supporters of the yearly control visit to tackle food fraud and opponents wishing to limit inspection visits to high risk farms to reduce cost and regulatory burden.

Strong criticisms were also voiced by organic producers on introducing specific pesticide thresholds, (as low as the ones for baby foods) as they claimed this would make organic farming impossible, contamination being unavoidable when 95% of agricultural land consists of conventional farming.

Finally many have rejected the proposed trading changes going as far as likening it to imperialism, for wanting to hold farmers in third countries up to a single set of EU standards, ignoring the particular socio economic and cultural contexts in which farmers operate across the world.