Import - Implementation rules, reasons and concerns

Seminar at Biofach 2008

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Reasons for new import regulation

> Action plan for organic food and farming of June 2004 (Action point 18): disadvantages of the current system – not accessible enough for operators in third countries; import certificate system not efficient

> Deadline was in place to develop a better import system (End of 2006)

> Now a new import regulation from 1. Jan 2007 has been decided – what are the implications?

> What were the main steps in this decision process?
Revision of the EU Regulation 2092/91 – what happened since last Biofach

> First draft December 2005 for a new Council regulation
  > Introduction of new system, including proposals for import

> From January 2006 until June 2007
  > Intensive discussion process between the private sector, EU Member states and EU commission and partly Council and EU parliament

  > Import rules are already concluded and apply from 1 January 2007.

> Final Council regulation (EC) 834/2007 has been decided
  > Import rules are integrated in this regulation. Work on implementing rules started.
Revision of the EU Regulation 2092/91 – what you should know?


> In January 2008 the EU Commissions made 2 proposals, one for production and one for import – currently discussed, decided Mai/June 2009 (?)

> What is the difference to old regulation EEC 2092/91:

> Most of the annexes will be transposed without change - however with changed structure

> „Normal“ and „exceptional“ production rules – possibility for a certain regional flexibility (given criteria)

> New logo – mandatory in Europe – option for import.

> Indication of origin (EU agriculture / Non-EU agriculture )

> Import rules. See presentation Herman van Boxem
Concerns and questions of the private sector, connected with the new import rules?
(e.g. from workshops of ORGAP Project, IFOAM EU commentary)

General concerns:

> There will be 3 relevant documents, which are complementary – but this might be confusing for producers

> There will be more flexibility for national governments within a given frame – but this needs transparent decision procedure

Regarding import

> The supervision of all proposed systems needs significant ressources and capacities!

> Avoidance of unnessary burdens (allowance of electronic certificates)

> Work of IFOAM-IOAS private accreditation system and Task force for harmonisation (FAO-OECD-IFOAM) should be taken into account

> Guidelines are necessary for: accreditation of control bodies, equivalence assessment