



## ORGANIC INPUTS EVALUATION

### **Evaluating inputs for organic farming – a new system**

This CD contains criteria for the evaluation of plant protection products, fertilizers and soil conditioners to be used in organic agriculture. These ideas were developed in the course of the European Union Concerted Action project «ORGANIC INPUTS EVALUATION» (QLK5-CT-2002-02565). For more information visit the project website [www.organicinputs.org](http://www.organicinputs.org).

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## ABOUT THE «ORGANIC INPUTS EVALUATION» PROJECT

The «ORGANIC INPUTS EVALUATION» project is an EU Concerted Action project carried out under the Quality of Life Work Programme, Fifth Framework Programme. The project runs from January 2003 to December 2005.

The following institutions are participating in this project:

- › Danish Research Centre for Organic Food and Farming - Danish Institute of Agricultural Sciences (DARCOF - DIAS), Denmark
- › Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), Switzerland
- › EcoS Consultancy, United Kingdom
- › Consiglio per la Ricerca e la Sperimentazione in Agricoltura (CRA) - Istituto Sperimentale per la Nutrizione delle Piante (ISNP), Italy
- › Associazione Italiana per l'Agricoltura Biologica (AIAB), Italy
- › Louis Bolk Instituut, The Netherlands
- › Soil Association, United Kingdom
- › Ludwig Boltzmann Institut for Biological Agriculture, Austria
- › Austria Bio Garantie / InfoXgen, Austria
- › Associação Portuguesa de Agricultura Biológica (Agrobio), Portugal
- › Kassel University, Germany
- › Danish Ministry of Agriculture, Foods and Fisheries, Plant Directorate, Denmark

## INTRODUCTION

The «Organic Regulation» 2092/91 EEC establishes the regulatory framework for organic farming in every Member State of the European Union. Annex II A of this regulation lists the products which are allowed for use as fertilizers and soil conditioners (F&SC), while Annex II B lists the products which are allowed for use as plant protection products (PPP). Article 7 contains the criteria for amendments to the Annexes.

While Annex II is very detailed, Article 7 is rather rudimentary. In addition, it contains a «non-contact clause» which states that new products may only be included if «the conditions for their use preclude any direct contact with the seed, the crop, crop products [...]». This is a major obstacle to the inclusion of new products. To improve the current situation, the ORGANIC INPUTS EVALUATION project suggests the following:

- › To change Article 7 of the Organic Regulation, establishing better evaluation criteria. This will facilitate the decision-making process concerning new and existing products, while safeguarding the principles of organic farming.
- › To establish better evaluation procedures, including assistance by an expert panel. This will make the evaluation process more straightforward and transparent, and facilitate involvement of Member States.
- › To utilize a criteria matrix, providing detailed guidance for all steps of the procedure. This will ensure transparency and consistency.

## CHANGES TO ARTICLE 7

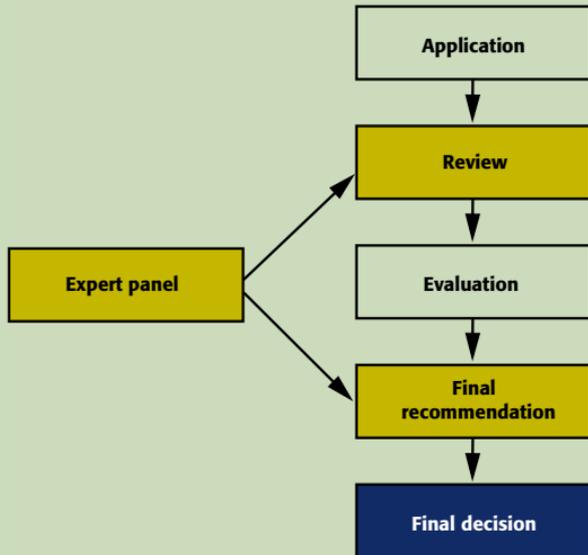
### Changes to Article 7

For the detailed proposals see the CD. The major innovations are:

- › The present evaluation criteria, section 1 (a) and (b), will be replaced by a set of criteria covering all aspects relevant for organic farming; the new section 1 (a) to (e). Some of these criteria are new in Regulation 2092/91, but consistent with other regulations on organic farming.
- › The present «non-contact clause» which precludes any PPP which come into contact with the crop is restricted to synthetic products; see new section 1 (d).
- › Products of microbial origin are explicitly admitted. Such products are currently not included in Annex II B, but are eligible for organic farming under other standards.
- › The criteria will be applicable not only to plant protection products, fertilizers and soil conditioners, but also to products which are used for other purposes related to crop production. This will help to close gaps and prevent disparities which may be caused by differing procedures for approval at national level.
- › The present «traditional use clause» (section 1a) is deleted. However, traditional use will be considered in the evaluation procedure, as one aspect in the «criteria matrix».

## STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES

Member States will be involved in the evaluation of requests, and the Standing Committee on Organic Farming (SCOF) in the decision-making. In addition, an expert panel assists in the evaluation process by reviewing applications and by reviewing Member State evaluations, with special emphasis on key areas of differences.



## CRITERIA MATRIX

Article 7 provides the general principles for evaluation of products, while the «criteria matrix» puts these into practice, providing detailed instructions and guidance for application and evaluation. The criteria matrix contains the following pages:

- › READ ME FIRST.
- › Application Form: provides guidance on the application and requests specific data.
- › Quick Screening: provides an indication of the product's chances of passing a full application/evaluation procedure.
- › Evaluation Form: provides guidance on the evaluation of applications, and asks for evaluation in the form of statements and as scores. The Evaluation Form is to be filled in by the expert panel (for provisional evaluation) and the Member States (for national evaluation).
- › Comparison: provides an overview of the evaluations made in different Member States, highlighting the key issues. Based on the national evaluations, the expert panel makes a final recommendation to the European Commission and the Standing Committee on Organic Farming (SCOF).
- › Abbreviations and Definitions: provides explanations of abbreviations and terms used in the matrix.

## CASE STUDIES

As case studies, hydrolized proteins (nitrogen fertilizers) and spinosad (an insecticide) were evaluated with the criteria matrix.

The case studies illustrate how to use the matrix. They are also interesting because there is a public debate on both of these products concerning whether they should be allowed in organic farming.



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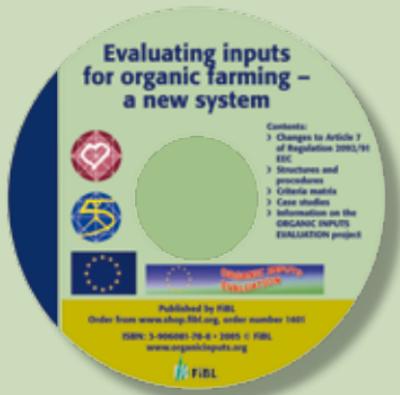
## CONTENTS

This CD contains:

- › Changes to Article 7 of Regulation 2092/91 EEC
- › Structures and procedures
- › Criteria matrix
- › Case studies
- › Information on the ORGANIC INPUTS EVALUATION project

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