

# IFOAM North America

## Rules of Procedure

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### Name

The name of the IFOAM body is IFOAM North America.

### Nature of the body

IFOAM North America is an organ within the IFOAM Action Group, organizing Affiliates of IFOAM – Organics International and their allies. Its geographic scope includes Canada, the United States, and English-speaking countries from the Caribbean.

### Mission

IFOAM North America's Mission is:

To provide a forum to exchange ideas and engage in North American-specific activities to advance organic agriculture and its principles, in partnership with IFOAM-Organics International and the global organic community.

### Vision

*The Vision of IFOAM North America is:*

*The worldwide adoption of ecologically, socially, and economically sound systems, based on the Principles of Organic Agriculture. The four principles of organic agriculture are as follows:*

- *The Principle of Health – Organic agriculture should sustain and enhance the health of soil, plant, animal and human as one and indivisible.*
- *The Principle of Ecology – Organic agriculture should be based on living and ecological systems and cycles, work with them, emulate them and help sustain them.*
- *The Principle of Fairness – Organic agriculture should build on relationships that ensure fairness with regard to the common environment and life opportunities.*
- *The Principle of Care – Organic agriculture should be managed in a precautionary and responsible manner to protect the health and well being of current and future generations and the environment.*

## Objectives

The purpose of IFOAM North America is to

- Pursue IFOAM – Organics International’s objectives in North America in a manner that IFOAM North America and its members deem appropriate;
- Represent its members collectively inside IFOAM – Organics International;
- Represent its members individually, collectively as IFOAM North America, and also as IFOAM – Organics International as a global organization, to the outside;
- Complement the work already being done by IFOAM – Organics International members to promote organic principles and practices in North America;
- Advocate for the effective involvement in North America by organic stakeholders outside of North America;
- Increase the number of Affiliates in IFOAM – Organics International so as to have broader reach and greater impact in North America and globally;
- Represent a balance of interests of the organic movement in North America.
- Have an inclusive conversation between processors, buyers, farmers, and all stakeholders in the organic community in North America.

## Membership

There are two categories of affiliation with the body: Member (with voting rights) and Associate (without voting rights). The basis for which category of affiliation applies is the membership status in IFOAM – Organics International.

The criteria for membership is

- Affiliation with IFOAM – Organics International.
- Established interests and involvement in the organic movement in the region.

The Members of IFOAM North America decide upon admission of Members and Associates. The Membership may expel affiliates that act against the objectives or interests of IFOAM – Organics International and/or IFOAM North America. Adverse decisions may be appealed to the IFOAM NA Membership. Adverse decisions by the IFOAM NA Membership may be appealed to IFOAM – Organics International.

Non-members may be invited to meetings and other events that IFOAM North America holds, at members’ discretion, provided no member objects.

## Organs

The official organs of IFOAM North America are the General Assembly and the IFOAM North America Board (NA Board). The General Assembly or the IFOAM North America Board may set up Working Groups, Committees and Task Forces and delegate specific tasks or authorities to such bodies or to individuals.

### General Assembly

A General Assembly shall be held regularly, announced in writing by the IFOAM North America Board. General assemblies must be announced three months in advance.

The General Assembly elects a Chair of the GA. The General Assembly votes by simple majority with at least 25% of the members represented. Voting is open, or by secret ballot if so requested by one member. Members have one vote. Associate members cannot vote. Votes by written proxy are permitted, but restricted to a total of five votes per person.

Decisions of the General Assembly are recorded in Minutes, which are signed by the Chair and distributed to all the members and to IFOAM – Organics International.

On the written request of 25 % of the members, the IFOAM North America Board or by IFOAM an extraordinary General Assembly shall be called.

#### Election of the IFOAM North America Board

The General Assembly may elect the NA Board by a majority vote of the members present. The GA may, by majority vote, choose have the Membership elect the NA Board by electronic ballot. In the case of an electronic ballot, a minimum of 25% of IFOAM NA members must cast ballots and the NA Board is elected by a majority of the votes cast. The following officers will be elected by simple majority vote at each General Assembly or by electronic ballot.

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

In addition the GA will appoint [2-5] Board members

#### **Contact point**

The President shall name the point of contact with IFOAM – Organics International, and shall be responsible for communication with the membership.

#### **IFOAM North America Board**

The IFOAM North America Board decides all issues not yet determined by the General Assembly. {The IFOAM North America Board establishes rules of procedure for itself.} The IFOAM North America Board takes decisions by simple majority with at least half of the members present and by open vote. On the request of three IFOAM North America Board members a meeting is called with six weeks notice.

## **Amendments, Modifications**

Any amendments to these Rules of Procedure must be approved by a majority vote of the members of IFOAM North America, shared with the IFOAM – Organics International Executive Director before they enter into force.

Membership fees are fixed by the General Assembly. IFOAM – Organics International invoices membership fees together with membership fees due to the global organization of IFOAM – Organics International.

## Communication with IFOAM

All relevant decision shall be communicated to IFOAM – Organics International in English.

## Termination

When IFOAM North America is terminated its remaining assets shall be transferred to IFOAM – Organics International.