

## Motion reconciliation Outcome

### *Motions submitted on the IFOAM Standard Version 0.2 and outcome of the motion reconciliation process (changes to Version 0.2, affecting Version 0.3)*

#### **Background:**

Version 0.2 of the IFOAM Standard was published in November 2011 and members were invited to submit motions on that version, prior to the final approval of the standard. IFOAM received a total of 15 motions. All those have been taken into account in the motion reconciliation process, through which motions could either:

- Be withdrawn by the motion maker, or
- Be accepted as friendly amendments and thereafter integrated into Version 0.3 of the IFOAM Standard, or
- Be merged with other motions of related intention, and /or
- Be put for membership vote.

The motion reconciliation process was led by the IFOAM Standard Committee and the ultimate outcomes are joint agreements between the IFOAM World Board and the motion makers.

This document offers an overview of the motions submitted and the outcome of the motion reconciliation process for each of them. This outcome is what constitutes the difference between Version 0.2 and Version 0.3 of the IFOAM Standard.

Version 0.3 was published in April 2012, alongside the opening of the membership vote on the motions that have been put for vote.

#### **Motion 1:**

**Submitter:** FiBL Switzerland, seconded by Biosuisse and BioAustria and FiBL Germany

#### **Suggested change:**

Change 4.2.2 from

“The start of the conversion period shall be calculated from the date of agreement with the control body.”

to

“The start of the conversion period shall be calculated from the date that the operator formally applies for inspection and certification by a control body”.

#### **Justification for this motion:**

The wording “agreement” is unclear. In some countries the time between application for inspection and certification and an agreement with the CB can be long and would unnecessarily prolong the period of conversion

#### **Outcome of the motion reconciliation process:**

The concern with the language proposed by FiBL is that the date of application may be too early as compared to the date that the application is actually received and accepted by the control body. Requirement 4.2.2 in Version 0.3 is changed to “The start of the conversion period shall be calculated from the date that an application has been received and agreed to by the control body”.

#### **Motion 2:**

**Submitter:** FiBL Switzerland, seconded by Biosuisse and BioAustria and FiBL Germany

**Suggested change:**

Insert “functional biodiversity, habitat management, beneficial organisms” after “green manures,” in the general principles of section 4.5 (Pest, Disease and Weed Management).

**Justification for this motion:**

The added measures are integral elements of pest, disease and weed management in organic agriculture

**Outcome of the motion reconciliation process:**

This change is integrated into Version 0.3, where the general principles of 4.5 read “Organic farming systems apply biological and cultural means to prevent unacceptable losses from pests, diseases and weeds. They use crops and varieties that are well-adapted to the environment and a balanced fertility program to maintain fertile soils with high biological activity, locally adapted rotations, companion planting, green manures, functional biodiversity, habitat management, beneficial organisms and other recognized organic practices as described in this standard.”

**Motion 3:**

**Submitter:** FiBL Switzerland, seconded by Biosuisse and BioAustria and FiBL Germany

**Suggested change:**

Add at the end of requirement 5.1.2 “Stocking rates for livestock should be appropriate for the region in question taking into consideration feed production capacity, stock health, nutrient balance, and environmental impact.”

**Justification for this motion:**

It is important to give more precise criteria to determine the stocking rate. Wording is from Codex Alimentarius Organic Guidelines

**Outcome of the motion reconciliation process:**

The addition of this language is an improvement in terms of a more detailed concept, but 5.1.2 is not the best place to put it in the standard, since 5.1.2 is about the behavioral needs. Stocking densities are currently addressed in requirement 2.2.4 from the environmental impact perspective, but the nutrient balance and feed capacity are not addressed anywhere. In Version 0.3, the proposed addition is added to the General Principle of section 5.1 (Animal Management), which now read:

“Organic livestock husbandry is based on the harmonious relationship between land, plants and livestock, respect for the physiological and behavioral needs of livestock and the feeding of good-quality organically grown feedstuffs. Stocking rates for livestock should be appropriate for the region in question taking into consideration feed production capacity, stock health, nutrient balance, and environmental impact.”

**Motion 4:**

**Submitter:** FiBL Switzerland, seconded by Biosuisse and BioAustria and FiBL Germany

**Suggested change:**

In 4.2.4 (“Crops harvested less than 36 months after the application of a prohibited input to crop or soil shall not be used or sold as organic.”) replace 36 by 24.

**Justification for this motion:**

A period of 36 months after the latest application of a prohibited input as condition for labeling a product as organic would signify a mandatory transition period of 36 months, also for annual crops, which would contradict article 4.2.3 as well as chapter 5 of EC 889-2008

**Outcome of the motion reconciliation process:**

The World Board produced a recommendation to vote against the motion. The motion makers withdrew the motion before it went for vote.

**Motion 5:**

**Submitter:** FiBL Switzerland, seconded by Biosuisse and BioAustria and FiBL Germany

**Suggested change:**

Add “It aims for new varieties particularly suited for organic production systems.” after “reproductive ability.” in the text of the General Principles of section 4.7 (Breeding of organic varieties) and change the last part from “Organic plant breeding is a holistic approach that respects natural crossing barriers and is based on fertile plants that can establish a viable relationship with the living soil. Organic varieties are obtained by an organic plant breeding program.” to “Organic breeding is always creative, cooperative and open for science, intuition, and new findings. Organic plant breeding is a holistic approach that respects natural crossing barriers. Organic plant breeding is based on fertile plants that can establish a viable relationship with the living soil. Organic varieties are obtained by an organic plant breeding program.”

**Justification for this motion:**

It is important to define the aim of organic plant breeding, i.e., to develop new varieties better adjusted to organic production. Otherwise this is not useful for the farmers. Moreover it must be emphasized that breeding is a creative process and should not be limited to very narrow standards like a routine production process.

**Outcome of the motion reconciliation process:**

The sentence “It aims for new varieties particularly suited for organic production systems” is added in 4.7 of the Version 0.3, as suggested. The other part of the motion is addressed in the consolidated motion plant breeding, which is being put for membership vote.

**Motion 6:**

**Submitter:** FiBL Switzerland, seconded by Biosuisse and BioAustria and FiBL Germany

**Suggested change:**

Change 4.7.2 from “Organic plant breeders shall develop organic varieties only on the basis of genetic material that has not been contaminated by products of genetic engineering.” to “Organic plant breeders shall develop organic varieties only on the basis of genetic material that has not been exposed to genetic engineering.”

**Justification for this motion:**

The wording needs to be more precise. “exposed to” is a better formulation if it should be avoided that ex-transgenic parental lines are used, that were derived from genetic engineering, but lost the transgene during further breeding. This is e.g. applied in apple breeding, here a transgene for early flowering from the popular tree is transferred to the apple to speed up the breeding process. Later on the gene is crossed out.

**Outcome of the motion reconciliation process:**

In Version 0.3, requirement 4.7.2 is changed to “Organic plant breeders shall develop organic varieties only on the basis of genetic material that has not been exposed to genetic engineering in the current or previous generations”.

**Motion 7:**

**Submitter:** FiBL Switzerland, seconded by Biosuisse and BioAustria and FiBL Germany

**Suggested change:**

Keeping the note and the exception equal, change the core of requirement 5.1.3 from:

“ 5.1.3 In particular, the operator shall ensure the following animal welfare conditions:

- a. sufficient free movement and opportunity to express normal patterns of behavior, such as space to stand naturally, lie down easily, turn around, , groom themselves, sleep and nest comfortably, as well as assume all natural postures and movements such as stretching. perching and wing flapping, etc.;
- b. sufficient fresh air, water, feed, and natural daylight, to satisfy the needs of the animals;
- c. access to resting areas, shelter and protection from sunlight, temperature, rain, mud and wind adequate to reduce animal stress;”

to

“5.1.3 In particular, the operator shall ensure the following animal welfare conditions:

- a. sufficient free movement and opportunity to express normal patterns of behavior, such as space to stand naturally, lie down easily, move around freely, groom themselves, sleep and nest comfortably, as well as assume all natural postures and movements such as stretching etc.;
- b. sufficient fresh air, water, feed, thermal comfort and natural daylight, to satisfy the needs of the animals;
- c. access to resting areas, shelter and protection from sunlight, temperature, rain, mud and wind adequate to reduce animal stress;
- d. provision of suitable materials and areas for exploratory and foraging behaviours;
- e. in addition to these general welfare conditions for all animal categories, the following provisions for specific animal groups have to be taken into account, i.e. for cattle: social grooming and grazing; for pigs: rooting, separate lying- activity/dunging- and feeding-areas, free farrowing, group housing; for poultry: nesting, wing stretching/flapping, foraging, dust-bathing, perching and preening.”

**Justification for this motion:**

- a) Move around freely is more demanding than turn around
- b) Thermal comfort: animals must be protected from extreme heat or cold.
- d) Suitable materials is seen as important by animal ethnologists
- e) It is important to be more explicit for main animal groups, which respond to animal welfare needs. The proposition comes from a task force for animal welfare from UK (Soil Association) Austria, Denmark and Switzerland.

**Outcome of the motion reconciliation process:**

In Version 0.3, the core of requirement 5.1.3 is changed to:

“5.1.3 In particular, the operator shall ensure the following animal welfare conditions:

- a. sufficient free movement and opportunity to express normal patterns of behavior, such as space to stand naturally, lie down easily, move around freely, groom themselves, sleep and nest comfortably, as well as assume all natural postures and movements such as stretching etc.;
- b. sufficient fresh air, water, feed, thermal comfort and natural daylight, to satisfy the needs of the animals;
- c. access to resting areas, shelter and protection from sunlight, temperature, rain, mud and wind adequate to reduce animal stress;
- d. provision of suitable materials and areas for exploratory and foraging behaviours;
- e. in addition to these general welfare conditions for all animal categories, provisions for specific animal groups also have to be taken into account, e.g. for cattle: social grooming and grazing; for pigs: rooting, separate lying-, activity/dunging- and feeding-areas, free farrowing, group housing; for poultry: nesting, wing stretching/flapping, foraging, dust-bathing, perching and preening.”

#### **Motion 8:**

**Submitter:** FiBL Switzerland, seconded by Biosuisse and BioAustria and FiBL Germany

#### **Suggested change:**

Add the following to requirement 5.1.7:

- “h. animals are regularly visited.
- i. when welfare and health problems occur, appropriate management adjustments take place (e.g. reducing stocking density).”

#### **Justification for this motion:**

h) Most of the organic animal husbandry standards do not mention that animal should be regularly visited, which was criticized by animal welfare specialists.

i) Appropriate management adjustments should be mentioned including reducing stocking densities.

#### **Outcome of the motion reconciliation process:**

In Version 0.3, requirement 5.1.7 is changed to:

“5.1.7 When animals are housed, the operator shall ensure that:

- a. where animals require bedding, adequate natural materials are provided. Bedding materials that are normally consumed by the animals shall be organic.
- b. building construction provides for insulation, heating, cooling and ventilation of the building, ensuring that air circulation, dust levels, temperature, relative air humidity, and gas concentrations are within levels that are not harmful to the livestock.
- c. no animals shall be kept in closed cages.
- d. animals are protected from predation by wild and feral animals.
- e. the above animal welfare requirements are fulfilled.
- f. animals are regularly visited and monitored.
- g. when welfare and health problems occur, appropriate management adjustments are implemented (e.g. reducing stocking density).”

#### **Motion 9 (consolidated motion resulting of the merging of 4 motions):**

**Submitter:** FiBL Switzerland and ABDP, seconded by Demeter Germany, Bio Suisse, BioAustria and FiBL Germany.

**Suggested change:**

Withdraw the table under 4.7.3 of the IFOAM standard draft version 0.2 and implement the following changes to the section 4.7:

- Change 4.7.3 to " Organic plant breeders shall disclose the applied breeding techniques. Organic plant breeders shall make the information about the methods, which were used to develop an organic variety, available for the public latest from the beginning of marketing of the seeds."
- Change numbering of 4.7.4 to 4.7.7
- Add the requirement: 4.7.4 " The genome is respected as an impartible entity. Technical interventions into the genome of plants are not allowed (e.g. ionizing radiation; transfer of isolated DNA, RNA, or proteins)."
- Add the requirement 4.7.5: "The cell is respected as an impartible entity. Technical interventions into an isolated cell on an artificial medium are not allowed (e.g. genetic engineering techniques; destruction of cell walls and disintegration of cell nuclei through cytoplasm fusion)."
- Add the requirement 4.7.6: "The natural reproductive ability of a plant variety is respected and maintained. This excludes techniques that reduce or inhibit the germination capacities (e.g. terminator technologies)."

In the General Principle section of 4.7, replace "Organic plant breeding is a holistic approach that respects natural crossing barriers and is based on fertile plants that can establish a viable relationship with the living soil. Organic varieties are obtained by an organic plant breeding program" by "Organic breeding is always creative, cooperative and open for science, intuition, and new findings. Organic plant breeding is a holistic approach that respects natural crossing barriers. Organic plant breeding is based on fertile plants that can establish a viable relationship with the living soil. Organic varieties are obtained by an organic plant breeding program."

**Justification for this motion:**

This motion is the result of a consolidation process on motions submitted by FiBL Switzerland and ABDP, and supported by Demeter Germany, Biosuisse and BioAustria and FiBL Germany. During the 1st International IFOAM Conference on Organic Animal and Plant Breeding in Santa Fe in 2009 there was a thorough discussion with the outcome that the positive list of breeding methods shall be removed. Instead of following this discussion, the positive list again gleamed up in the new draft without bringing ahead any new convincing arguments for it among the concerned members of IFOAM, which are in particular the organic plant breeders. Since then, there has also been a broad and intense discussion process in Switzerland, Germany and within ECO-PB about breeding principles and techniques.

Plant breeding is a creative development in itself. Creativity needs an open space to find new methods and ideas for tomorrow. But once developed the community or society has to judge, whether it can be accepted or not.

The current approach in the standard is to prohibit every method that is not known and approved yet. There are several problems with this approach:

- the current list in the standard is incomplete and was not updated the last 10 years. It refers only to some classical conventional breeding methods which are by far not exhaustive for organic plant breeding activities. For instance, typical methods like selfing, population breeding, poly cross, multiline, composite cross development, recurrent selection etc, are not included. There is also research showing that special sounds and tones as well as eurhythmia can cause an induction of variation and image generating methods might be useful for selection, both can be used in organic plant breeding. It is clear that methods like sounds, tones and eurhythmia are fully in line with the principles of organic agriculture and it would be absurd to not allow these

in an organic breeding programme. If methods would become restricted to the above list the application of such unconventional methods would not be allowed. The time is too short to revise and complete these lists immediately as further discussion among all stakeholders around the globe is needed.

- the future updating of the list is a too slow process compared to the speed of innovations in plant breeding methods. If then in a certification procedure the certifier comes to the point to declare a method as new and not yet described with the allowed methods, the applicant has to start a motion at IFOAM to make his method an accepted one. This can take up to ten years or longer like organic plant breeders learned from IFOAM in the past. Why then should a creative organic plant breeder work within standards, which are oriented to IFOAM-standards? He/She will then do breeding under organic farming without being an organic plant breeder and keep the method secret. This will lead to the paradox situation that real progressive and typical organic developments under and for organic plant breeding cannot be marketed as an organic innovation. Creativity will be sold out to conventional breeding then.

The approach that we would like to see is to allow all plant breeding methods except a few, based on clear principles, and to force organic plant breeders to disclose to the public the methods they have used. Then the whole public can become aware of the method and can bring the procedure into question. This transparency could be more effective than more or less experts and hobby experts that put for instance also hybrids on the list of accepted methods, where every farmer knows that hybrids cannot be maintained, which shows that a hybrid is an unorganic variety in itself. A clear demand for transparency is the modern way between prohibiting everything that is not allowed and allowing everything that is not forbidden. But it is of course required to make clear, what kind of method the community doesn't accept. Instead of working with incomplete lists it is better to define the principles of organic plant breeding as was worked out by an expert group in Germany and Switzerland last year. We propose to add these principles as a replacement of the table of allowed methods. In summary, we believe that the disclosure of breeding techniques together with the exclusion of genetic engineering in the broader sense of the IFOAM definition and ionising irradiation is sufficient to avoid an unwanted development in organic plant breeding.

**Outcome of the motion reconciliation process:**

This consolidated motion is already the outcome of the motion reconciliation process. It is being put for votes to the IFOAM membership.

**Motion 10:**

**Submitter:** FiBL Switzerland, seconded by Biosuisse and BioAustria and FiBL Germany

**Suggested change:**

Change point d the text in the exception box of requirement 5.7.3 from “this exception is not granted more than 3 times on a given animal.” to “this exception is not granted if the animal has had more than three courses of remedial treatments with chemically-synthesised allopathic veterinary medicinal products or antibiotics within 12 months, or more than one course of treatment if their productive lifecycle is less than one year.”

**Justification for this motion:**

d) This proposed article can cause significant problems: small ruminants are usually treated against parasites at least once a year. If they live longer than 3 years they would lose their organic status after 3 years. This is against an aspired long lifecycle which is propagated in organics. The same problem can arise in dairy cows with mastitis treatments. New proposition is wording as in EU Regulation 889/2008.

**Outcome of the motion reconciliation process:**

The suggested change is integrated into Version 0.3, which now reads, on point d of the exception box in 5.7.3: “this exception is not granted if the animal has had more than three courses of remedial treatments with chemically-synthesized allopathic veterinary medicinal products or antibiotics within 12 months, or more than one course of treatment if their productive lifecycle is less than one year.”

**Motion 11:**

**Submitter:** NOFA and seconded by NOC

**Suggested change:**

Change the text of the exception box in requirement 9.1 from “Operators who hire fewer than ten (10) persons for labor and those who operate under a state system that enforces social laws are not required to have such a policy.” to “Operators who operate under a state system that enforces social laws are not required to have such a policy.”

**Justification for this motion:**

Exempting operations that hire fewer than ten persons as employees would exclude from this provision most organic farms in the US and in many other countries. There is no reason why a farm with only a few employees cannot have a policy on social justice.

**Outcome of the motion reconciliation process:**

In Version 0.3, the entire exception box in 9.1 is deleted.

**Motion 12:**

**Submitter:** FiBL Switzerland, seconded by Biosuisse and BioAustria and FiBL Germany

**Suggested change:**

Delete requirement “8.1.7 Organic products shall not be labeled as GMO-free in the context of these standards. Any reference to genetic engineering on product labels shall be limited to the production and processing methods themselves having not used GMOs.”

**Justification for this motion:**

Article 8.1.7 should be eliminated and 8.1.8 amended because labeling as GMO free is a political issue and should not be covered in production standards. Furthermore it is not clear why the rule refers only to non-GMO and not to other methods, e.g. radiation.

**Outcome of the motion reconciliation process:**

In Version 0.3, the previous requirement 8.1.7 is deleted, and the numbering of 8.1.8 is adjusted accordingly.

**Received comment (not submitted as a motion):**

**Commenter:** internal

**Suggested change:**

Change the place of requirement 3.3.1 in a way that is more logical.

**Justification:**

Currently, the structure is as follows:

“3. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CROP PRODUCTION AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY



3.3. Organic production of micro-organisms for processed food and feed

3.3.1 Only organically produced substrate shall be used.”

Microorganisms are neither crops nor animals, so it seems that either this requirement is misplaced or else the chapter title should be modified.

It seems that this could be worked into the processing chapter in a logical way.

**Outcome for Version 0.3:**

Requirement 3.3 and its sub-requirement 3.3.1 are deleted in Version 0.3 and instead a requirement “7.2.7 For the production of organic micro-organisms for processed food and feed, only organically produced substrate shall be used.” is added to section 7.2 (Ingredients).