



Joint media release by IFOAM – Organics International, Apicon, Coopsol, Demeter, ECOSUR, FiBL, Naturland



## Organic Beekeeping Enjoys International Backing

### IFOAM Apiculture Forum established – World Conference 2016 in Argentina

**The importance of honeybees to agriculture and thus to human survival is well known. Nevertheless, the honeybee as a species is in danger of extinction but we still have time to prevent this. In order to encourage organic beekeeping and contribute to saving the honeybee, IFOAM – Organics International has therefore established an Apiculture Forum.**

(15th October, 2015) The new forum pools the interests and experiences of beekeepers, traditional honey collectors, farmers, civil society and other organizations involved with bees and organic beekeeping. Its establishment is the result of a joint initiative by **IFOAM – Organics International**, **Naturland** (Association of Organic Agriculture), **FiBL** (Research Institute of Organic Agriculture), **Coopsol** (an Argentinian beekeeping co-operative), **ECOSUR** (a Mexican research institute for sustainable development), **Demeter** (Association for bio-dynamic agriculture) and **Apicon** (a beekeeping consultancy).

### World Conference: Supports National Organic Beekeeping Activities

The founding members elected Manfred Fürst, team leader of the international department of the organic association Naturland, as group co-ordinator. The first major task for the forum will be the organization of the World Conference on Organic Beekeeping. It will be held between 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2016, in Argentina, and managed jointly with APIMONDIA, the International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations, and Coopsol, the Argentinian beekeeping co-operative.

In the words of Manfred Fürst, co-ordinator of the IFOAM Apiculture Forum, "Argentina is one of the world's leading producers of GMO crops, so we shall obviously have to deal with the problems caused by genetic contamination. We will though also focus on the contribution which organic beekeeping makes to rural areas and I am confident that this will galvanize the organic movement in Argentina".

The impetus for the establishment of this new forum came from the World Conference in Mexico in 2012. The success with which this jointly organised event was met, motivated ECOSUR, Naturland and FiBL to create a formal institution uniting efforts to promote organic beekeeping throughout the world.

### Putting organic beekeeping on the international agenda

The main aim of the IFOAM Apiculture Forum is to advance the development of organic beekeeping and to encourage the traditional practices employed by sustainable beekeeping. The tasks to be tackled are many and various. One of them is to expand the current organic beekeeping standards, which so far have concentrated on quality aspects of honey and other beekeeping produce, to give

added weight to the species-appropriate needs of bees. At a time when beekeepers the world over are suffering from the severe depletion of their bee colonies, the forum also sees its job as a lobby and platform designed to raise awareness of the need to combat practices that damage the environment and are harmful to bees and, last but not least, to guarantee beekeepers a sustainable source of income.

### Contact

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### Links

- > IFOAM – Organics International: [www.ifoam.bio](http://www.ifoam.bio)
- > Naturland: [www.naturland.de/en/](http://www.naturland.de/en/)
- > FiBL: <http://www.fibl.org/en/homepage.html>
- > Demeter: [www.demeter.de](http://www.demeter.de)
- > Coopsol: [www.coopsol.com.ar](http://www.coopsol.com.ar)
- > Ecosur: [www.ecosur.mx](http://www.ecosur.mx)