



Media release

African Organic Agriculture Training Manual: Implementation in Africa Begins

(Frick/Nairobi, November 16, 2011) Switzerland's Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) today presents its African Organic Agriculture Training Manual at the International Conference on Ecological Organic Agriculture in Nairobi. The presentation marks the beginning of a two-year validation process. FiBL has invited organizations involved in organic and sustainable agriculture training in Africa to test the materials.

Organic agriculture can provide attractive options and improvements for African farmers and local economies. FiBL and partners from the African organic movement have created an illustrated training manual and a comprehensive online directory of organic agriculture in Africa to support smallholders in implementing organic farming techniques, improving sustainability of agricultural production and increasing market opportunities. The partners include the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), the African National Organic Agriculture Movement (NOAMs) and agricultural experts from across Africa.

"Experts from our institute worked with African specialists to produce a manual of agricultural best practices for growers, farmer groups and extension workers", explains FiBL project leader Lukas Kilcher. "The training materials will strengthen communication between extension staff and smallholders. The aim is to promote high-quality training and encourage application of sustainable soil management, resource-efficient farming and modern marketing techniques."

The project is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture (SFSA)*.

EXCELLENCE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Das FiBL hat Standorte in der Schweiz, Deutschland und Österreich
FiBL offices located in Switzerland, Germany and Austria
Le FiBL est basé en Suisse, Allemagne et Autriche

FiBL Schweiz / Suisse
Ackerstrasse, CH-5070 Frick
Tel. +41 (0)62 865 72 72
info.suisse@fibl.org, www.fibl.org



Forschungsinstitut für biologischen Landbau
Institut de recherche de l'agriculture biologique
Research Institute of Organic Agriculture
Istituto di ricerche dell'agricoltura biologica
Instituto de investigaciones para la agricultura orgánica

Thorough validation process begins now

After intensive work, a first draft set of training materials is available now for free download from the website www.organic-africa.net. To ensure the training materials provide the most useful information and best practices, FiBL has initiated a two-year field validation process. In parallel, additional modules will be completed over the coming months.

All organizations working in extension and training of sustainable and organic agriculture in Africa are invited to test the training materials in their local context and to give feedback. A feedback form is available on the website. A final, consolidated version will be available by 2015. "Critical, but enthusiastic teachers, advisors and farmers are today's prime movers of agricultural development in Africa", says FiBL Director Urs Niggli. "We are delighted to contribute our expertise to their efforts to promote sustainable farming practices with a growing number of research and extension activities."

A contribution to food security

"This publication's goal is to increase the sustainable agriculture options for African smallholders, and to help them become more successful farmers", adds Niggli. "Our project contributes to food security in Africa by promoting improved production methods and strengthening market-driven farming systems."

FiBL contact

- > Lukas Kilcher, Head of Communications and leader of the African Organic Agriculture Training Manual project, lukas.kilcher@fibl.org, Tel. +41 (0)62 865-7262

Further information

- > The training materials and information on the procedure for validation are available for download on www.organic-africa.net

*FiBL's African Organic Agriculture Training Manual is based on research funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture. The manual's findings, conclusions and recommendations are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect positions or policies of either Foundation.

Download of this media release

This media release is available at www.fibl.org/en/media.html.