

Media Release

Organic Market Development in Ukraine

(Kyiv, June 30, 2012) On June 26, an official launch of the Swiss project “Organic Market Development in Ukraine” took place in Kyiv at the National Academy of Science of Ukraine. Financed by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), the Swiss Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) will facilitate the integration of Ukrainian small and medium-sized enterprises into international trade through certified organic produce.

The project “Organic Market Development in Ukraine” is the follow-up to a first 6-year project phase implemented by FiBL from 2005 to 2011. “In the next phase from 2012 to 2016 we will concentrate on two sectors with strong market demand: arable crops for the international market in western Europe and dairy products for the domestic market,” says the director of the Swiss Cooperation Office in Ukraine and SECO representative in Ukraine Guido Beltrani. “In addition, we will establish a trademark for typical products from the Ukrainian Carpathians, strengthen local services and establish a conducive business environment for the country’s organic sector. The project is fully aligned with SECO’s policy on trade in organic produce and contributes to the objective of the Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Ukraine 2011-2014: *strengthening the economic sustainability of small and medium-sized enterprises through export diversification and integration into international trade.*”

“Our Ministry sees great potential for organic agriculture in Ukraine,” stresses Anatolii Rudiuk, head of the agriculture division of the Ministry of Agricultural Policy and Food of Ukraine. “An Ukrainian organic law is being drafted, and an increasing number of pioneers are working in the organic sector. International support and expertise is very much needed. Our producers and processors lack know-how in farm conversion to organic management, and in marketing and promotion. We have to gather this information and disseminate it in order to raise awareness and strengthen the sector. The Swiss are known as highly competent experts in organic agriculture. Therefore we strongly believe that the new Swiss-Ukrainian organic project will foster the organic sector and contribute to increased trade activity.”

“Organic farming in Ukraine can make a vital contribution to counteracting the degradation of valuable Chernozem (black soils),” notes Tobias Eisenring, project leader of the Organic

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Market Development project at FiBL. “In recent years, the humus content of these soils has been dramatically depleted and soil life greatly reduced. As a consequence, yields are far below the level they could be. However, with the increasing international demand, the project wants to convince local entrepreneurs that investing in organic agriculture is worthwhile and pays off for both consumers and producers. In the last few months, demand for certified organic dairy products in Ukraine rose considerably. Due to the high quality requirements for certified organic products, organic food also strongly contributes to the improvement of food safety in Ukraine. Currently, some 190 certified operators in Ukraine are engaged in organic farming. The need for technical know-how and market support is enormous. Thus until 2016, specialists from FiBL and other international partners will bring in their expertise and, together with Ukrainian professionals, adapt it to the Ukrainian context.”

Based on a request from stakeholders from the Ukrainian Carpathians, the project will also support market actors from this region in the elaboration of a regional trademark. The objective of the trademark is to promote typical certified organic and non-organic products from the region and hence maintain and create employment in one of the poorest regions of Europe.

This press release is available on the Internet at www.fibl.org/en/media.html

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