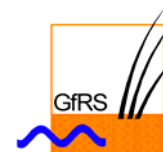


# Press Release



## More Security in the Organic Certification



**How can a pro-active risk management recognise and prevent fraud attempts? How are traders, label organisations, certification bodies and authorities dealing with fraud in the organic sector? These were the central topics of discussion among 60 experts at the first European Workshop for the Prevention of Fraud, held on 2 and 3 October at the Research Institute for Organic Agriculture (FiBL) in Frick, Switzerland.**



(Frick, 8.10.2007) The market for organic food is growing rapidly in Europe, North America and Asia. The flow of trade is becoming more international and there is a shortage in the supply of various commodities. This leads to a situation where those who do not take the organic requirements seriously are tempted to enter the lucrative market.

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Fraud is a phenomenon that can never be completely abolished in our society. Likewise, the organic market, which has currently the best quality management system of the whole food market, cannot completely prevent fraud. Every detection of a fraud case contributes to the improvement of organic certification because its quality assurance system is adaptive. The key to success is cross border communication among inspection and certification bodies, trade companies, label organisations and authorities.

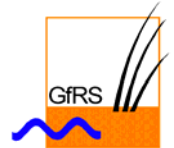
Analysing known fraud cases, identifying the reasons and introducing preventive measures were among the aims of the 60 experts from organic trade businesses, organic certification bodies and the competent authorities who met in FiBL in Frick, Switzerland on 2 and 3 October. "The multidisciplinary approach and the broad participation of the stakeholders was especially valuable for the analysis" explained Bo

van Elzakker, from Agro Eco, one of the organisations that initiated the international workshop.

Participants discussed measures such as company specific quality management systems for traders and importers. For the certifiers and authorities other key issues were the possibilities of residue analysis, cross checks and electronic certificates, an international rapid alert system and an increased risk orientation in the surveillance system. All agreed that improvement of transparency and communication in the control chain is needed. The results of the workshop, among them a Code of Good Practice for certification bodies and trade, will be presented at BioFach in February 2008.

Delegates participating at the Workshop were from Great Britain, Belgium, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and Spain as well the US and China. The workshop was an initiative from Agro Eco, Netherlands; FiBL, Switzerland; GfRS, Germany; International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS), USA and the European Organic Certifier Council (EOCC).

The Swiss State Secretariate for Economic Affairs (seco), the Ministry for Nutrition and Rural Areas Baden-Württemberg and the EOCC sponsored the workshop.



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