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“Competition for Resources in a Changing World:
New Drive for Rural Development”

IFOAM's Comprehensive Information Package on Development Options for Countries with an Emerging Organic Sector

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Abstract

In various countries and regions where the organic agriculture sector is emerging, governments as well as private-sector organisations and institutions are looking for competent advice on how to develop the sector. In November 2003, IFOAM's Government Relation Committee organised an informational event in Bangkok for official government representatives from Asian countries who were working on national standard-setting and national regulations. The interest was substantial, and a lack of comprehensive information and knowledge about the most important procedures and challenges was obvious.

Within the frame of the I-GO II program, IFOAM is supporting the development of emerging organic sectors in Developing Countries. Besides the establishment of IFOAM Information Points in selected regions, the objective is to facilitate the development of emerging organic sectors through the provision of a comprehensive information package. This information package includes recommendations on possible options for governments, the private sector, development agencies and consultancies on how to achieve a sustainable development of the sector. The recommendations are the result of analytical cases studies, reflecting experiences from various countries, selected to show different situations in different stages of development with variations regarding market conditions, regulations, political framework, structure of the organic sector, and geography. Each case study is analysed with a focus on the following topics:

- Best practices for organic policy development
- Market development:
 - Standards, regulations and certification
 - Consumer awareness
- Role of and relationship between different partners, esp. in public-private partnerships
- Extension and training

As an additional element of the information package, guidelines for the whole process of developing the emerging organic sector have been developed. Publications addressing all aspects of this process are being made available through a new online resource on the IFOAM website.

Keywords: Development options, extension and training, market development, organic agriculture, policies, public private partnerships