



Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Production

Mandate for technical advice on organic fertilizers and soil conditioners II

■ **Background**

In recent years, several Member States have submitted dossiers under the second subparagraph of Article 21(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007¹ concerning the possible inclusion, deletion or change of conditions of use of a number of substances in Annex I to Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008², or more generally, on their compliance with the above-mentioned legislation. Furthermore, several Member States have requested also evaluation of some techniques used in fertilizer production in terms of their usefulness to and compliance with the EU organic farming legislation. Therefore, the Group is requested to prepare a report with technical advice on the matters included in the terms of reference.

■ **Terms of reference**

In the light of the most recent technical and scientific information available to the experts, the Group is requested:

1. To answer if the use of the **substances** listed below are in line with the objectives, criteria and principles as well as the general rules laid down in Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 and, hence, can be authorised to be used in organic production under the EU organic farming legislation:
 - LT dossier (2009): **Iodine** as a fertilizer
 - AT dossier (2011): **Renewable calcined phosphate** as a fertilizer
 - AT dossier (2011): **Xylite** as a soil enhancer

¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28 June 2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91. (O.J. L 189 , 20.7.2007, p. 1.)

² Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 of 5 September 2008 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products with regard to organic production, labelling and control (OJ L 250, 18.9.2008, p. 1)

- EL dossier (2012): **Amino 16, mixture of amino acids** as a soil conditioner
- UK dossier (2014): **Struvite (Magnesium ammonium phosphate hexahydrate)** as a fertilizer
- PT dossier (2014): **Industrial lime from sugar cane production** as a soil enhancer

2. To assess which of the production and processing methods commonly applied to fertilizers, like simple processes and treatments (e.g. drying, chopping, composting and fermentation) or more sophisticated techniques (e.g. micronization in High-Tech-Nano mills), used in EU organic farming, in particular the processing of by-products of plant and animal origin, are in line with the organic farming principles and which ones should be rejected. In addition, The Group is additionally asked to evaluate to which degree additives and preservatives in commercial fertilizers for organic production may be accepted.

In relation to this question, Czech Republic submitted a dossier regarding Leonardite - Potassium humate (which is already authorised) to be used in liquid as well as in raw form.

3. Also it is proposed to the group to assess whether it would make sense to group in one single category the currently separated categories "Composted or fermented mixture of household waste", "Composted or fermented mixture of vegetable matter" and "Biogas digestate containing animal by-products co-digested with material of plant or animal origin as listed in Annex I". Lastly, the group is asked whether it would be appropriate to propose limits of heavy metals for relevant categories of fertilisers in Annex I in a similar way to "composted or fermented mixture of household waste" and "sapropel".

4. DK question about plant extracts: To which degree are these covered by annex I to Regulation 889/2008? If accepted as fertilisers, should specific extraction methods be required or prohibited?

5. The Group is also asked to give its opinion about having a fast-track reviewed procedure for the less problematic substances such as soil conditioners.

▪ **Deadline**

The deadline for adoption of the final report: 18 June 2015