



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Director-General

Brussels, 31 JUL. 2012  
Ares ref.:  
MFcde/agri.dg3.h.3(2012)1055041

**Subject: Gender separated semen**

Dear Ms Andersen, dear SCOF delegate,

In the Standing Committee for Organic farming (SCOF) of 10/11 July 2012 Denmark raised the issue on whether gender separated semen may be used as a reproduction method in organic livestock farming.

In order to clarify the question, I would like to provide you with the following answer as already outlined in the meeting of the SCOF.

It is our understanding that the gender separation of semen is a reproduction technique which is not in line with the concept of organic farming.

The technique "gender separation of semen" is characterized by the division of the spermatozoa into X- (female) and Y- (male) chromosome bearing populations based on their difference in DNA content. In a next step, the resultant 'sex-sorted' spermatozoa are then able to be used in conjunction with other assisted reproductive technologies such as artificial insemination or in-vitro fertilization to produce offspring of the desired sex.

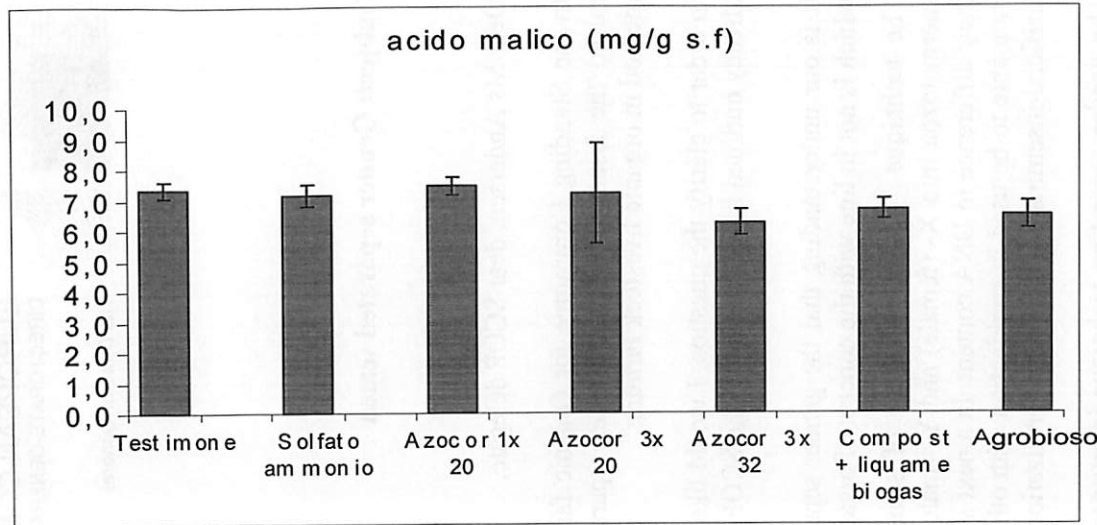
The gender separation technique intervenes in the natural balance of male and female offspring. By using only the one or the other fraction of semen the gene pool of the given species is highly reduced which consequently leads in medium and long-term to the reduced biological diversity of livestock.

The fact that the gender separation technique may be followed by an artificial insemination (which would be allowed in organic farming beside natural methods) does not create an automatic permission for also allowing gender separation. It is a separate reproduction technique, clearly taking place before any other possible methods for insemination or fertilization.

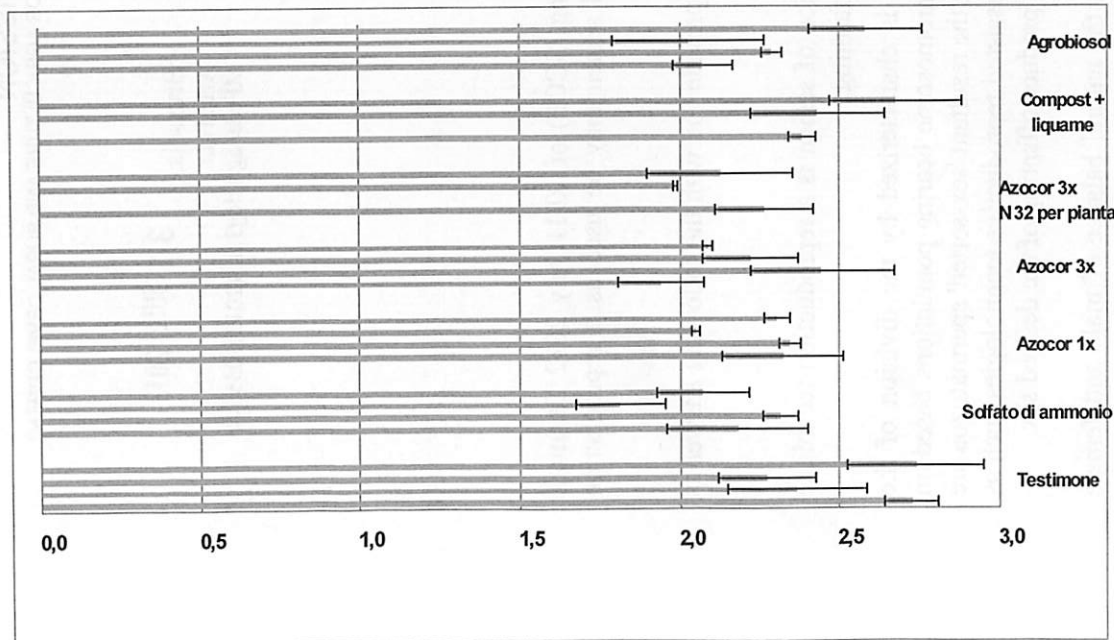
Ms Mette Mørk ANDERSEN  
Permanent Representative Denmark

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## Qualità dei frutti: composizione in acidi organici, zuccheri, profilo composti aromatici



Al momento, i campioni selezionati sono stati analizzati per la loro composizione in acidi organici (è riportato il grafico del contenuto di acido malico che è risultato il più rappresentativo) ed in composti volatili. I dati sono in fase di elaborazione.



Il grafico riporta la somma del contenuto dei composti volatili principali: butil acetato, 2-metil butil acetato, esil acetato e butil 2-metil butanoato

I would like to reiterate the relevant provisions in Regulation (EC) No 834/2007:

Recital (18) stipulates that:

*"The organic livestock production system should aim at completing the production cycles of the different livestock species with organically reared animals. It should therefore encourage the increase of the gene pool of organic animals, improve self reliance and thus ensure the development of the sector."*

Article 3- Objectives states that:

*"Organic production shall pursue the following general objectives:*

*(a) establish a sustainable management system for agriculture that:*

*(i) respects nature's systems and cycles and sustains and enhances the health of soil, water, plants and animals and the balance between them;*

*(ii) contributes to a high level of biological diversity;"*

Article 14 - Livestock production rules provides for:

*"(c) with regard to breeding:*

*i) reproduction shall use natural methods. Artificial insemination is however allowed;*

...

*(iii) other forms of artificial reproduction, such as cloning and embryo transfer, shall not be used;"*

The above mentioned information is provided on the basis that in the event of a dispute arising on the meaning of a provision of EC Law it is, under the European Treaties, ultimately for the Court of Justice to provide a definitive interpretation.

Yours sincerely,



José Manuel SILVA RODRIGUEZ

Copy: SCOF delegates