



Activity report of the European Consortium for Organic Animal Breeding (Eco-AB): 2009

by Wytze Nauta, President

Members:

By the end of 2009 Eco AB had 7 registered full members: organisations from the following countries: Norway, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Germany, France (new in 2009), United Kingdom and Denmark. Four full members sind ausgeschieden: 3 organisations from Germany (“Forschungsinstitut für ökologische Tierzucht und Landnutzung (FIT)”, “Bioland” and “University of Kassel”) decided to change from full members to associate members (Associate members pay a membership fee of only 100 Euro. They get all information from Eco AB, can give their inputs to discussions, but they are not allowed to vote or to elect and they can't be elected as board members). From Poland we have never heard anything anymore and all e-mails and letters came back.

The board:

Board members by the end of 2009 were: Wytze Nauta (president), Anet Spengler (secretary), Jo Connington, Ton Baars (treasurer), Peter Lovendahl and Günter Postler.

Because of the changed status of membership, Günter Postler and Ton Baars can not longer stay in the board of Eco AB. The job of the treasurer (Ton Baars) becomes vacant. Joanne Connington agreed to become the new treasurer. Lotta Rydhmer of SLU was asked to become a new board member.

Activities:

The 2nd general meeting of Eco AB took place in Bristol, UK. 7 people from member organisations and 4 guests attended this meeting.

The 3rd workshop about Organic breeding was organised alongside the UFAW-international symposium on “Darwinian selection, selective breeding and the welfare of animals” at the University of Bristol, UK in June 2009. 11 people joined this workshop. Anna Wallenbeck, Wytze Nauta and Anet Spengler presented their PhD-work on pig- and dairy cattle breeding. Discussions on a differentiation of breeding practices and breeding backgrounds between conventional and organic breeding and on the possibilities of integrating breed improvements into organic livestock populations were discussed in groups. (see Eco-AB Minutes GM and Workshop Bristol 2009)

Wytze Nauta, Frank Augsten and Anet Spengler organized a scientific workshop on the use of reproductive techniques for organic breeding at the World Breeding Conference of IFOAM in Santa Fe (USA) in August 2009. Around 20 people from all

over the world joined this workshop and contributed to the discussions. Anet Spengler and Jacqueline Haessig (from the IFOAM-board) took over the task to summarize those discussions and to promote and coordinate further discussions among the workshop members by e-mail. Those will be sent to the IFOAM-board as a proposition for regulations in the field of reproductive techniques for organic animal breeding. The discussion paper on reproductive techniques in organic agriculture (which was written for the workshop by Anet Spengler and Frank Augsten, on the basis of a paper written by Beat Bapst) and the minutes of the workshop are attached to this annual report. Several Eco AB members gave contributions on their research work at the IFOAM-breeding-conference.

Wytze Nauta wrote a proposal for an Eco AB-COST-Action-project. Several members of Eco AB contributed to it. Unfortunately it didn't get accepted.

Wytze Nauta also wrote a proposal for an Eco AB-research project on "Farmers vision on breeding in organic farming in Europe". It will be discussed in Leipzig.

Finances:

The membership fee stayed at 1000 € for full members in 2009. All full members paid their fee. The revenues from membership fees amounted to 7'345.37 € in 2009.

The expenditures (for administration, rent of a room, food and drinks at the GM and workshop) amounted to 1'569.93 €.

The surplus revenue (including the revenue from last year at the beginning of 2009) amounted to 9'142.75 € by the end of 2009. This amount was 5'575.44 € higher than by the end of 2008.