



## PRESS RELEASE

Teslic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, May 2nd 2006

### **First IFOAM International Conference on Organic Wild Production to Take Place from May 3rd to 4th in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

60,000,000 hectares managed for organic wild production

**Teslic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, May 2nd 2006** - *From May 3rd to 4th 2006 in Teslic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the first IFOAM International Conference on Organic Wild Production will address the burgeoning sector for diverse wild harvested products. The conference has been organized together by the Agricultural Institute of the Republic of Srpska – Banja Luka, [Grolink](#) and the [International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements \(IFOAM\)](#).*

More than 165 participants from 40 countries have registered for the conference, which is an indication of the broad interest in the field of sustainable wild collection. Jovo Stojcic, Director of the Agricultural Institute of the Republic of Srpska – Banja Luka, notes "wild collection is an important part of the agricultural economy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and organic wild production here currently represents 5% of the global total. This conference will strengthen both the local and international production of organic wild products, and will also give participants the opportunity to experience the beauty and diversity of our peaceful country." The conference location is at the heart of the Central European wild collection area, an appropriate setting that offers real-life examples of wild collection systems. The concurrent exhibit will feature the attractive and sumptuous harvest of the often labor intensive work.

In preparation for the conference, the International Trade Center, one of the conference partners, commissioned a study titled Overview of Production and Marketing of Organic Wild Products. The study documents current global production, and identifies an impressive 376 different organic wild products currently being produced for the global organic market, ranging from medicinal and aromatic plants, nuts, fruits, edible mushrooms and other products. Covering 64 countries and representing 60-80% of the global total for organic wild production, the survey finds that at least 60,000,000 hectares worldwide are certified for organic wild production, producing over 200,000 tons.

Trade in organic wild products plays an increasingly important role in protecting and enhancing biodiversity – often in sensitive ecological environments – throughout the world. There is also a growing interest in organic wild products by the body care medicinal herb sectors, which is likely to trigger further dramatic growth rates in the coming years. [Angela B. Caudle](#), IFOAM Executive Director offers "conventional wild collection often leads to the decline in the availability of wild resources. Organic wild collection based upon the [IFOAM Basic Standards](#) offers a systematic approach that ensures the sustainability and yields of ecosystems, and is an important part of achieving the worldwide adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound systems that are based upon the [Principles of Organic Agriculture](#)."

The conference will focus on the harvesting of wild vegetable products from forest, "natural" lands, pastures and uncultivated land in the agriculture landscape, and will concentrate on current production that enters the organic market stream, extending to other concepts, such as Fair Trade, sustainable forest management certification and Good Manufacturing Practices.

The conference is expected to be a milestone in aligning methods and standards for organic wild collection, bringing the sector a step further in terms of professionalism and sustainability, and making wild collection a more visible and viable sector.

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