

## **PRESS RELEASE 1/2015**

### **Agricultural production potentials of Eastern European countries**

Expert panel at Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) on 15 January 2015

**Halle (Saale), 14 January 2015 – An agricultural-policy expert panel on the topic ‘Value chain driven development of rural areas in Eastern Europe – perspectives for food, fuel and fibre’ will be held as part of Berlin International Green Week at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA). The event will be jointly hosted by IAMO and the German Agribusiness Alliance, Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations will be provide a forum for well-renowned panellists from politics, business and academia to discuss opportunities and challenges for the development of rural areas in Eastern Europe in view of globally growing demands for foods, energy production and renewable resources.**

Due to the high agricultural production potential of eastern European countries that is still not realized to its full possibilities, international experts underline the important role of this region to cope with the growing demands for food, energy production and renewable resources. These expectations meet a multifarious picture of agricultural development in Eastern Europe. Albeit that individual regions benefit from highly fertile soils, easy access to export ports and employment of state-of-the-art production technologies, most remote regions with less favourable conditions for agriculture have been unable to stop – despite government funding measures – the decline of farming activities and breakdown of rural infrastructure. Demographic change and ongoing migration of young people to the cities is to be expected to even accelerate structural change in rural areas.

Opening addresses will be given by Dr. Thomas Kirchberg, Chairman of the German Agribusiness Alliance, Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations (OA), und Dr. Dietrich Guth, Department Head, Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), and followed by IAMO Director Professor Thomas Herzfeld with a keynote speech discussing problems faced by agriculture in rural regions in Eastern Europe. During the ensuing panel discussion Aleksander Petrikov, Deputy Minister of Agriculture of the Russian Federation, will present current strategies in agrarian policy and funding measures towards developing agricultural added-value chains in Russia. In light of the present political and economic situation, Tatiana

Gubina, Managing Director, Russian Association of Potato and Vegetables Market Participants, and Josef Tillmann, Managing Director, Tönnies Lebensmittel GmbH & Co. KG, will speak about the effects attained through those efforts for production and trade in the agricultural sector. Vladimir Rakhmanin, Assistant Director General and Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia, and Dr. Walter Stinner, German Biomass Research Centre (DBFZ), will analyse during the panel discussion round the necessity of investments and activities towards establishing competitive framework conditions. The expert panel will be moderated by IAMO Director Professor Thomas Herzfeld.

The expert panel discussion will be held on 15 January 2015, 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm, in Hall M2/M3 of the CityCube Berlin. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in German, English and Russian. Admission will be free of charge. Interested media representatives are invited to register at [presse@iamo.de](mailto:presse@iamo.de) until 15 January 2015.

On 17 January 2015, from 9 am to 3 pm, IAMO will also be present with an information stand at GFFA's cooperation market in the CityCube Berlin. For further information about the complete programme of the GFFA 2015, please, go to the following webpage: [www.gffa-berlin.de/en](http://www.gffa-berlin.de/en)

*Text: 3,712 characters (with spaces)*

### **About IAMO**

The Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (IAMO) analyzes economic, social and political processes of change in the agricultural and food sector, and in rural areas. The geographic focus covers the enlarging EU, transition regions of Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, as well as Central and Eastern Asia. IAMO works to enhance the understanding of institutional, structural and technological changes. Moreover, IAMO studies the resulting impacts on the agricultural and food sector as well as the living conditions of rural populations. The outcomes of our work are used to derive and analyze strategies and options for enterprises, agricultural markets and politics. Since its founding in 1994, IAMO has been part of the Leibniz Association, a German community of independent research institutes.

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### **About Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations and the German Agribusiness Alliance**

The Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations (OA) is a joint organization of the leading associations representing German business and acts as a central point of contact for German companies with interests in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Central Asia, South Caucasus and South-eastern Europe. The OA

supports economic policy developments in bilateral relations with those countries and promotes trade, investments and service transfers by German companies in this region. The German Agribusiness Alliance joined the Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations and coordinates the international commitment of the German agricultural and food industry since 2001. The OA is co-founder of the GFFA Berlin e.V.

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