

PRESS RELEASE 16/2015

Urbanisation and migration from rural areas challenging agriculture in Eastern Europe

Agricultural Policy Symposium at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture on 14 January 2016

Halle (Saale), 30 November 2015 – IAMO and the German Agribusiness Alliance of the Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations (OA) will hold an agricultural policy symposium at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) within the framework of the International Green Week 2016. This event on ‘Urbanisation, Migration and Structural Change – Challenges and Strategies for Agriculture in Eastern Europe’ will take place on 14 January 2016 at the CityCube Berlin, Germany. Experts from politics, science and business will touch upon questions on challenges ahead concerning the supply of the growing populations in cities with safe and healthy food along ongoing migration from rural areas to the cities in Eastern Europe.

During state socialism, agriculture and rural areas in many Eastern European countries were subject to strong state influence on consumer prices, subsidized inputs and relatively low investments in social or technical infrastructure combined with restrictions for the rural population’s freedom of movement around the country. Subsequent privatisation of state and cooperative farms did not solve the economic problems of agriculture and the rural economy.

Despite Black Sea grain’s growing significance for global markets, economic growth with a positive impact on the notable shortcomings in producing competitive high-value-added products from the countryside remains practically out of sight. Rural areas keep lagging behind its urban rivals in terms of economic development, watching its population leave for the cities. To promote rural development and support social infrastructure of local communities, both political and business initiatives aim to attract and retain young and qualified employees in agriculture.

The expert panel discussion will be held on 14 January 2016, 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm, on level 3 of the CityCube Berlin. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided Admission will be free of charge. Interested media representatives are invited to register at presse@iamo.de until 8 January 2016.

On 16 January 2016, from 9 am to 3 pm, IAMO will also be present at GFFA's cooperation market (level 1, hall A8) of the CityCube Berlin. Come to the IAMO booth to talk to researchers and to get information on the institute's research activities.

Registration for both events can be made until 8 January 2016 online via: www.gffa-berlin.de/en/online-registrierung.

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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 the 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 regionArbeitsgruppe Agrarwirtschaft, or the German Agribusiness Alliance, unites leading associations and companies in the German agriculture and food sector focussing in particular on agricultural machinery and equipment, animal husbandry, plant breeding and plant protection as well as agricultural trade. Its objective is to actively support the development of the agriculture and industries in partner countries by providing knowhow, modern

technology as well as by promoting economic relations and direct investment. The German Agribusiness Alliance operates its Eastern Europe office in co-operation with the Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations.

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