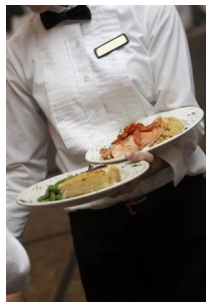


EUROPE: THE USE OF BIO PRODUCTS NEEDS BETTER REGULATION



Bio products have become popular in the EU recently and more and more restaurants have started using bio food to prepare their meals. Not everywhere, however, is the practice regulated. The French have decided to propose new regulations that would provide customers with more transparent information about the products they buy.

There is no European legal norm that would set rules for handling bio food in restaurants. Nevertheless, EU member countries can apply their own laws. **The rising number of restaurants offering bio meals or using products of ecological agriculture in France persuaded the National Committee for Ecological Agriculture (Comité National Agriculture Biologique (CNAB)) to act and create some regulations.** The suggested regulations are not intended for schools yet. The proposal was submitted in July and has been discussed since October.

There are thousands of places where you can order bio meals in Germany too. As Foodservice.cz reported, such meals could be bought in restaurants as well as in school cafeterias and university campuses. **In Germany, the offer of these products is regulated and customers know what they buy.** Restaurants offering bio meals are certified. Similar policy was applied in Austria where restaurants' owners were very interested in the certification and customers also appreciated it.

Not all European countries, however, have regulations concerning bio products. For example **Czech Ministry of Agriculture does not plan any changes in the current practice, even though the products of ecological agriculture are more and more popular in the country.** Some restaurants use bio food without informing anybody about it; others use it to attract new customers. It depends entirely on the restaurants' owners if they want to tell the truth about it. Some restaurants have certificates that prove they use bio products. However, only very few owners bother to obtain a certificate if they do not have to have one.

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