**- Press Release -**

## The International Platform of Insects for Food and Feed

## Brussels, 26th May 2021

# IPIFF hails the EU authorities' move to set up standards for insect frass as a major step forward for the European insect sector

The International Platform of Insects for Food and Feed (IPIFF) - the focal point of the European insect production sector in Brussels - welcomes the agreement between the European Commission and European Union (EU) Member States on the setting of EU standards for processed insect frass.

On May 25th, Member States' delegates in the EU Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed[1] have backed a draft Commission Implementing Regulation, aiming at setting EU baseline standards for the valorisation of insect frass as fertiliser, as part of the EU legislation on animal by-products. A valuable fertilising product, insect frass is – from a quantitative point of view – the main output generated by insect farming activities[2]. Similar to compost or other types of animal manure, frass contains relevant nutrients and micronutrients, as well as chitin[3], which could stimulate the growth of beneficial bacteria in soil[4]. These properties make frass a valuable solution for farmers active in crop production across the EU[5], who will now be able to incorporate insect frass as part of their fertilisation strategies.

Building on the latest technical knowledge, the proposed Regulation aims at establishing a level playing field in the EU, putting forward uniform EU rules that guarantee the safe application of insect frass as fertilising product in agriculture[6]. '*This agreement constitutes a major progress for our sector – as these harmonised standards would ensure that most of the nutritional properties of frass, with relevance for soil and plant health, are preserved*', stated IPIFF's President **Antoine Hubert**. Following the entry into application of these new rules, '*insect producers are committed to collaborating with local authorities and ensure that these requirements can be realistically implemented on the ground*', complemented the IPIFF President. '*Once this text will become applicable, the experience we will gather on the ground will also allow us to contribute to the development of tailored standards for insect frass*', said **Chloé Phan Van Phi**, IPIFF Executive Committee Member in charge of circularity. '*Future research will play a key role in ensuring that we unlock the real potential of insect frass on agricultural land, improving both plant and soil health*', concluded **Aman Paul**, IPIFF Executive Committee Member in charge of research.

In parallel, this legislative breakthrough will allow the insect sector to maximise its contribution to the 'Farm to Fork' objectives. '*While dejecta of worms and insects were already approved in EU organic agriculture since 1994*[7]*, the possibilities to use insect frass remained rather limited in the EU. This new decision – together with the move of the Commission to clarify that processed frass* (i.e. in line with the measures included in the 'horizontal legislation') *would be allowed in organic production across the EU*[8] *– will contribute to achieving the 25% target for organic agricultural land by 2030*', complemented **Chloé Phan van Phi**.

As part of the same piece of legislation, the EU legislator suggested authorising the use of silkworm (*Bombyx mori*) processed animal proteins (PAPs) in aquaculture feed (and soon for poultry and pig feed), expanding the list of seven authorised species. '*In our view, the inclusion of silkworm – a species already approved to be used in the feed of non-food producing animals - as part of the list of authorised insect species is a logical step, as this species was part of these evaluated by EFSA in its risk profile opinion from 2015. We hope that the final procedural steps will run smoothly enough and that the text could enter into force by the end of the year*', concluded IPIFF's Secretary-General **Christophe Derrien**. According to the applicable EU procedures, the above Regulation shall enter into force after a three-month scrutiny period.

[1] Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed Section Animal Health and Welfare.
[2] I.e. in addition to insect meal, insect lipids/oils and whole insects.
[3] As mentioned by Quilliam et al., 2019, '*fragments of chitin in frass biofertilisers can induce disease resistance in crop plants grown in biofertiliser-amended soil*'.
[4] As mentioned by Poveda et al., 2019, frass has the potential to promote 'plant growth and induce tolerance to abiotic stress'.
[5] Such as cereal or oilseed farming, orchards or vineyards.
[6] Following a treatment step at 70 degrees Celsius for one hour.
[7] Commission Regulation (EC) No 2381/94 of 30 September 1994.
[8] In line with the list of products and substances for use in organic production – Annex I, Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008.

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**If you wish to hear more regarding the development of the European insect sector, follow us on our social media platforms!**

**The International Platform of Insects for Food and Feed (IPIFF)** is a non-profit organisation which represents the interests of the insect production sector towards EU policymakers, European stakeholders and citizens. Composed of 76 members, most of which are European insect producing companies, IPIFF promotes the use of insects and insect-derived products as top tier source of nutrients for human consumption and animal feed.