

Jansen's web site has remained with the same claims since an update after BioFach. Apart from polite suggestions that he should correct the misinformation on his web site in relation to information emerging from our investigation of his complaint we have had no contact with him.

The following claims are incorrect statements and damaging to the reputation of the IOAS:

1. [Http://www.organicfraud.org/](http://www.organicfraud.org/)

Jansen statement: These local certifiers are in turn only controlled once in every two years by IFOAM's accreditation body IOAS. These IOAS people (almost) never visit a field.

IOAS response: IOAS works on an accreditation and surveillance cycle of four years. Every four years a full document review is performed followed by a site visit of about one week. About 40-50% of the visit is spent visiting certified operators, watching an inspector work in addition to file reviews in the office. The four-yearly review process takes place over 12 months. Up to the end of 2005, IOAS has performed two-three day annual site visits between the main assessments. From January 2006, assuming a certification body is performing well, the site visits may be reduced to every two years. Even at this level of surveillance, the IOAS performs more on farm visits than any other accreditor.

2. [Http://www.organicfraud.org/problem.html](http://www.organicfraud.org/problem.html)

He states: 'The confidence that IOAS and S.A. have in local controllers is not always justifiable and should be labelled: very naive.'

IOAS response: The IOAS treats all certification bodies in any part of the world in the same manner and in line with internationally accepted requirements (ISO/IEC 17011). IOAS is recognised by the US Dept. of Commerce National Institute for Standards and Technology as working in line with ISO17011 for both IFOAM and ISO65 accreditation programmes it operates. IOAS does not award unjustifiable confidence. It awards accreditation based on documented procedures, detailed review of certification body structures, policies and procedures and performs on site visits both to certification offices and to farms and factories.

3. [Http://www.organicfraud.org/problem.html](http://www.organicfraud.org/problem.html)

He states: Is IOAS really inadequate ?

Yes, because they visit their clients only once in every two years, and then only look in the books. If a local certifier is corrupt, or just turns a blind eye during a field-inspection and does not see what you and I can see easily, IOAS will accredit these certifiers as long as the books look O.K. The local certifier will thus declare products to be organic which are in many cases only free of residue.

IOAS response: covered by 1 and 2 above.

4. [Http://www.organicfraud.org/biofach/index.html](http://www.organicfraud.org/biofach/index.html)

He quotes IOAS: IF WE CHANGE TO UN-ANNOUNCED CONTROLS WE WILL LOOSE 50% OF OUR MEMBERS. This was the most remarkable statement I heard at Biofach. I heard it from the IOAS director and from the assistant director. The interesting question then is: WHY? Their answers to that question were vague and not convincing: it would be too expensive. This clearly cannot be the case: unannounced visits are the most efficient way to find fraudulent producers. (Almost the only way!) It looks as if IOAS directors are afraid that with BETTER CONTROL a lot of members will not find it attractive anymore to stay in IOAS. Why could that be? Well, it could be that fraudulent members do not like better controls. Does that mean that 50 % of their members are fraudulent ?

IOAS response: This 'statement' was never said by either staff member. Jansen clearly considers that unannounced visits are the only way to catch fraud. We agreed with him that unannounced visits are one of various essential tools to uncover fraud. The IFOAM Norms require that at least 5% of operators should receive unannounced visits every year and this is imposed by IOAS. No organic regulation requires unannounced visits (though certain EU member states do require them). What, in addition, we told Jansen was that the formulation of the IFOAM Norms is a consultative process and we knew from previous discussion of this issue that various certification bodies were not in favor of increasing the proportion of unannounced visits, not because they 'are fraudulent' but because unannounced visits may not allow the detailed assessment of facilities and paperwork that a scheduled visit can. A mixture of both is required and based on risk assessment which is exactly what the IFOAM Norms requires. IOAS implements these requirements on all accredited bodies working in over 70 countries.