

## **International Federation of Agricultural Producers**

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**CSD 16**  
**May 6 , 2008, New York**

### **THEMATIC SESSION ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT**

Intervention from the Farmers' Group by  
Mr. Nic Opperman, AgriSA, South Africa

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to intervene on behalf of farmers through IFAP on perspectives related to bio-energy and land use.

Bio-energy represents a promising tool for rural development and income generation for farmers provided benefits go to the agricultural sector instead of going to large multinationals. Farmers need to become providers of value added products instead of producers of raw material and buyers of energy – but, farmers are not saying that bio-energy is a panacea – there is a need for careful planning both to avoid competition for food and environmental degradation – farmers are well aware of this opportunity but not at any cost – good examples exist and need to be documented.

In its Fact Sheet on Bio-fuels and Land Use, the European Association for Bio-industries (EUROPABIO) offers some insights on land use issues related to bio-fuels development.

The use of second generation bio-fuel feed stocks (non-food based feed stocks like cellulosic biomass) has the potential to reduce pressure on food crops and reduce land use.

It is possible to increase bio-fuels production without using more land by increasing land productivity (biomass per hectare) through improved agricultural practices, and improving crop quality (i.e. develop crops with high stress tolerance or those with high fermentable carbohydrates for ethanol production) through modern biotechnology. The Fact Sheet also stresses the need for “more data and common methodology to measure land-use-change input and agricultural-practice impact on the GHG (greenhouse gas) balance”.