



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

COCERAL and COPA & COGECA call for level playing field to ensure competitive supply of raw materials in the EU

Brussels, 13 October 2016 – COCERAL and COPA & COGECA organized a workshop in the European Parliament this week, hosted by MEPs G. La Via, D. Buda and N. Nicolai, to discuss the outlook, competitiveness and challenges of producing and supplying raw materials in the EU.

The panelists at the event presented the outlook for the supply and demand of raw materials in the EU over the past 5 years, looking at where grains, oilseeds, protein crops and feedstuffs were sourced from and what the trends in production and imports are. Future perspectives were also touched upon and discussions focused on what can be expected in terms of production in the EU over the next 5 years to see if Europe will be able to meet demand (domestic and from non-EU countries) given the different challenges that exist such as climate change, crops etc.

During the debate, Max Schulman, Chairman of the cereals working party of COPA - COGECA stated that farmers are entrepreneurs who are looking for a good functioning EU Single Market and correct market signals. Investment in logistics and infrastructures are crucial. Today, EU farmers are lagging behind the other competitors due to a lack of access to various factors vital for crop production, such as plant protection products.

Juan Corbalan, representing the Spanish agri-cooperatives, pinpointed the crucial role of cooperatives in collecting, distributing and organising the flow of commodities to put them on the market. Furthermore, cooperatives are becoming more vertically integrated and innovative to support their members who are farmers and give them a better return for their produce. To be successful, we need to further develop the critical mass of cooperatives in the grain sector.

Oliver Balkhausen, COCERAL Chairman of the Market and Agricultural Policy section said “collectors and traders are the glue in the supply chain distributing goods, capacities and services. Europe is a market in a global context, so technical barriers delaying or preventing the supply of raw materials to the EU chain partners jeopardise European competitiveness. Innovative toolboxes need to be available for a stable EU market”, he concluded.

COCERAL and COPA & COGECA consequently call for new breeding techniques, sufficient plant production products and futures markets to help hedge against economic risks.

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COCERAL is the European association of trade in cereals, rice, feedstuffs oilseeds, olive oil, oils and fats and agrosupply. It represents the interest of the European collectors, traders, importers, exporters and port silo storekeepers of the above mentioned agricultural products. **COCERAL's** full members are 26 national associations in 18 countries and 1 European association [Unistock]. With about 3500 companies as part of **COCERAL** national members, the sector trades agricultural raw materials destined to the supply of the food and feed chains, as well as for technical and energy uses. COCERAL has two associated members in Switzerland and Serbia and one extraordinary member Gafta

COPA AND COGECA:

THE VOICE OF EUROPEAN FARMERS AND EUROPEAN AGRI- COOPERATIVES

COPA AND COGECA are the united voice of farmers and agri-cooperatives in the EU. Together, they ensure that EU agriculture is sustainable, innovative and competitive, guaranteeing food security to half a billion people throughout Europe. Copa represents over 13 million farmers and their families whilst COGECA represents the interests of 22,000 agricultural cooperatives. They have 70 member organisations from the EU member states.