



17COMM16

COCERAL, FEDIOL and FEFAC call for coherence in EU strategy for enhancing soy production

Brussels, 14 July 2017 - COCERAL, FEDIOL and FEFAC members rely on the EU production of oilseeds, soy and other oil- and protein-containing crops. We share the objective of an increased production of soy in Europe. According to the protein balance sheet developed by the European Commission, with input from COCERAL, FEDIOL, FEFAC and several other stakeholders, Europe produces already important amounts of protein, but there is a clear deficit of protein-rich crops and feed material. Out of the 31,2 million tons of protein-rich soybean meal used for feed in Europe in 2015/2016, 1,5 million were produced from EU grown soybeans¹.

Even though increasing EU soy and legumes production is highly desirable, this cannot be the only response to the EU protein deficit and import dependence. While we understand the foreseen strategy of enhancing soy and protein production in the EU, we should also emphasize that there needs to be coherence between policies: in this sense, over 11 million tons of protein-rich meals, mainly from rapeseed, are directly related to the production of biodiesel and will disappear if the phasing out of crop-based biofuels proposed in the post-2020 revision of the Renewable Energy Directive is actually implemented. The Commission proposal, indeed, is in clear contradiction with the protein plan announced by Commissioner Hogan and would trigger the loss by EU farmers of a highly valuable source of high protein-containing feed and an essential source of revenue.

Putting the emphasis on the fact that enhancing production of legumes, and particularly soy, will replace imported soy that contributes to deforestation, means ignoring the considerable efforts that have been undertaken by European stakeholders and their overseas partners to supply from sustainable sources. Soy is not necessarily unsustainable per se and there are options for addressing deforestation and preventing it from happening at origin. A promotion of EU soy cultivation should leave space to initiatives that support sustainability and no-deforestation in the soy chain. Similarly, it should be noted that the non-GM/GM status is not a criterion for sustainability and the choice for one or the other quality should be left to market decision as is currently the case.

We recommend that the newly established Market Observatory for Crops looks into the potential impact of such strategy and comes up with a detailed assessment and with recommendations.

¹ According to the European Commission 2015/2016 protein balance sheet published in April 2017 under : https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sites/agriculture/files/cereals/balance-sheets/protein/2015-16_en.pdf

Notes to the editor:

Germany and Hungary have presented, in June 2017, a joint EU Soy Declaration aimed at supporting the increased production of legumes, in particular soy, in Europe. They received support from over ten Member States willing to sign this declaration on the sidelines of the next Agricultural Council meeting on 17 July.

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 21 national associations in 15 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 1 associated member in Switzerland and 2 European Associations (EUROMALT and EUROMAISIER). Gafta is an extraordinary member of COCERAL. Contact: Teresa Babuscio, Secretary-General, Tel. +32.2.502 08 08, Teresa.Babuscio@coceral.com

FEDIOL, the EU vegetable oil and protein meal industry association, represents the interests of the European oilseed crushers, vegetable oil refiners and bottlers. FEDIOL members are 12 national associations and associated company members in 5 other EU countries. With about 180 facilities in Europe, the sector provides 20,000 direct employments. Its members process approximately 55 million tonnes of commodities a year, both of EU origin and imported from third country markets. The sector processes notably rapeseed, sunflower seed, soybeans and linseed into oils and meals for food, feed, technical and energy uses essentially on the European market. www.fediol.eu – For further information please contact Nathalie Lecocq at FEDIOL +32.2.771 53 30.

FEFAC, the European Feed Manufacturers' Federation, represents 24 national Associations in 23 EU Member States as well as Associations in Switzerland, Turkey, Serbia, Russia and Norway with observer/associate member status. The European compound feed industry employs over 100,000 persons on app. 3,500 production sites often in rural areas, which offer few employment opportunities. Contact: Anton Van Den Brink, Public Relation Advisor, Tel. +32. 2.285.00.50, fefac@fefac.eu