



European Association representing the trade in cereals, rice, feedstuffs,  
oilseeds, olive oil, oils and fats and agrosupply  
Comité du commerce des céréales, aliments du bétail,  
oléagineux, huile d'olive, huiles et graisses et agrofournitures

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## COCERAL Position Paper

### on EU-Mercosur Exchange of Offers and Upcoming Negotiation Rounds

The European Union is a net importer of coarse grains, rice, oilseeds, vegetable oils and meals from the countries of Mercosur and Mercosur countries have proved to be a reliable source of these agricultural raw materials.

In view of the upcoming critical negotiation rounds where offers will be exchanged and discussed, **tariff elimination** in the context of an eventual EU-Mercosur FTA should therefore contribute to maintaining the trade flows with the region, so as to ensure sufficient volumes of raw materials being available to the EU food, feed and non-food industries. We would also welcome the use of other trade tools available to foster trade, such as implementation of tariff-rate-quotas at a zero duty rate for commodities such as rice.

Besides tariff and quota constraints, COCERAL calls on the European Commission to address **technical and non-tariff barriers** urgently and without delay, which are cause to important setbacks to trade between the two regions as well as a competition-deteriorating elements to EU industries and consumers. These issues are:

- Import taxes and the differential export taxes (DETs), which affect soybean and soybean products in particular, must be eliminated within the framework of the FTA.
- Certain lengthy procedures for the recognition of phytosanitary norms, which currently act as trade barriers, should be revised and a clear harmonisation should be sought.
- The asynchronous approval of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) between Mercosur and the European Union needs to be addressed as it represents a serious threat and already causes trade disruptions.

In addition, COCERAL notes that the creation of an effective free trade area and integration between the Mercosur countries is a key condition for the consistent implementation of the future FTA. The EU should therefore monitor and assist Mercosur countries in their efforts to harmonising their trade practices, so as to avoid trade disruptions and future non-tariff barriers to trade.

**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.