

15/10/14

## Press Release

### **COPA-COGECA UNDERLINES VITAL ROLE OF EU BIOFUEL SECTOR IN CREATING GROWTH AND JOBS, STABILISING COMMODITY MARKETS AND ENSURING ANIMAL FEED SUPPLIES**

Copa-Cogeca highlighted at a seminar this week how the EU biofuels sector is crucial for creating growth and jobs in EU rural areas, at the same time as reducing oil dependency, cutting greenhouse gas emissions, stabilising commodity markets and ensuring animal feed supplies.

Speaking at the event, Copa-Cogeca Secretary-General Pekka Pesonen said “The European agri-food sector accounts for 40 million jobs mostly in EU rural areas. Without a viable biofuels sector, jobs in the EU agriculture and forestry sectors will be threatened which is particularly worrying in the current economic crisis which has cost 6 million jobs already. Animal feed supplies will also be put at risk. This is because the bi-products from conventional biofuel production play an essential role on the feed protein market and in the EU food chain”.

He continued “It is not about choosing between producing foodstuffs or biofuels. Rather, it is about benefiting as much as possible from the resources that we have at our disposal to produce food and renewable energies as well as other products – often using the same crops. Biofuels do not go hand in hand with market conflicts. On the contrary, they help to stabilise commodity markets and prices, providing greater security for consumers and farmers alike. Stable agricultural markets encourage investment and improve productivity, benefiting food, feed and biofuels production, and fostering development in rural areas. Biofuel production also acts as an incentive for investment in agricultural research, making it possible to increase yields by employing better practices and sowing new plant varieties. Biofuels produced from oilseeds, cereals and sugar beet stimulates the development of these crops”.

Wrapping up, Mr Pesonen said “It is consequently important to have a dynamic biofuels sector. The fact that the Commission decided to perform a U- turn in its biofuels policy in 2012 represented an unacceptable breach of trust. This proposal led to an abrupt halt in the development of the sector in several Member States and hinders the development of the European biofuels industry and employment in rural areas. The proposed limit on biofuels produced from arable crops also jeopardises how the EU aims to increase its self-sufficiency for proteins for animal feed. Investments in the advanced biofuels sector are only possible if there is a sturdy and stable political framework in place until at least 2030. I therefore urge the Commission, MEPs, Ministers, heads of state and governments to continue to support biofuels made from arable crops”.

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