

7/4/17

## Press Release

**Newly elected Chairman of Copa and Cogecas Cotton Working Party Enrique Gonzalez underlines importance of sector for economy and calls for specific support for sector to continue.**

Newly elected Chairman of Copa and Cogecas' Cotton Working Party underlined today the importance of the sector for the economies of producer countries and called for specific support in the sector to continue.

Speaking after his election in Brussels, Mr Gonzalez said "Cotton production is of major economic and social importance for regions where it is cultivated. It provides rural and industrial employment to over 200 000 people and, in some areas, represents over 50% of total agricultural income. It is consequently vital to maintain the specific crop support under the CAP as it has worked well and contributes to ensure an economically viable and sustainable sector".

He continued "The sector continues to pursue new tools to raise awareness and to help consumers identify quality produce through the use of the logo on geographical origins. Producers are also reducing the level of inputs they use whilst guaranteeing proper management of the soil and water used for irrigation through integrated production techniques. For example, in Spain, 84% of the area grown is through integrated production techniques which has enabled producers to cut fertiliser use by 40% and reduce phytosanitary treatments by 42% at the same time as ensure water savings of 30%. This is a clear sector engagement to sustainability.

Mr Enrique Gonzalez Molina is from the Spanish Cooperative Group Cooperativas Agro-Alimentarias and Jose Luis Ibanez Alvarez from Coag was elected as Vice-Chairman

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For further information, please contact:

**Cynthia Benites**

Senior Policy Advisor

Tel.: +32 2 287 27 70

Cynthia.Benites@copa-cogeca.eu

**Amanda Cheesley**

Press Officer

Mobile: + 32 474 840 836

amanda.cheesley@copa-cogeca.eu

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**CDP(17)3038:1**

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