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## Press Release

### **COPA-COGECA WELCOMES PARLIAMENT DEBATE ON ANIMAL WELFARE AND CALLS FOR EU RULES TO BE BASED ON SCIENCE AND FOR EU STANDARDS TO APPLY TO IMPORTS**

Copa-Cogeca welcomed today the public hearing on Animal Welfare organised by European Parliament, and emphasised the need to ensure that EU legislation is based on good scientific evidence and that the EU's high welfare standards also apply to imports.

Speaking in Brussels, Copa-Cogeca Secretary-General Pekka Pesonen insisted "All too often debates governing animal welfare become highly emotional and are based on biased information. EU legislation must be based on sound scientific evidence, accompanied by an impact assessment which takes into account the socio-economic costs and effects on industry and trade. Consultation with key stakeholders is crucial. Copa-Cogeca believes that EU legislation should be properly implemented in the EU, but that the EU's tough welfare requirements must also be applied to imports from non-EU countries.

Per Olsen, Chairman of Copa-Cogecas' Working Party on Animal Health and Welfare, who participated at the hearing, meanwhile welcomed Parliaments' draft report on Evaluation and assessment of the Animal Welfare Action Plan 2006-2010 by Marit Paulsen, especially the recognition that high welfare standards result in additional costs for farmers. But the draft report does not ensure that the same standards apply to imports. Some issues also go beyond the scope of the draft report and should be dealt with in the framework of the EU animal health strategy, Per Olsen added.

Furthermore, Copa-Cogeca advocates a cost-sharing approach so that the costs of higher welfare standards are passed on to all actors in the food chain, including consumers. Copa-Cogeca consequently calls on EU politicians to ensure a better functioning of the food supply chain.

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For further information, please contact:

**Pasquale di Rubbo**

Policy Adviser

Tel.: +32 2 287 27 45

Pasquale.DiRubbo@copa-cogeca.eu

**Amanda Cheesley**

Press Officer

Mobile: + 32 474 840 836

amanda.cheesley@copa-cogeca.eu

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