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Press Release

COPA-COGECA HOSTS WORKSHOP TO FIND “WIN-WIN” SOLUTIONS FOR FARMERS TO MEET STRINGENT WATER QUALITY TARGETS

A workshop under the auspices of the European Water Technology Platform was organised to find solutions which enable EU farmers to better meet the stringent water quality targets requested under EU legislation. It was jointly held today by the EU Agricultural Organisations Copa-Cogeca and EUREAU, representing EU drinking water suppliers and waste water services.

The workshop aimed to start a dialogue between the EU agriculture sector and EU water sector on how best to improve water quality whilst maintaining a competitive EU farm sector.

Buffer strips and zones consist of a piece of land where farming restrictions are imposed. New EU requirements define extra obligations for buffer strips and zones to be established on agricultural land. In 2012, it will become compulsory to establish buffer strips along water courses under EU cross-compliance rules under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The establishment of buffer zones is also an element of the National Action Plans required under the new Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of Pesticides.

Speaking in Brussels, Copa-Cogeca Secretary-General Pekka Pesonen insisted “These requirements impose additional costs and burdens on EU farmers, threatening the very competitiveness of the EU farm sector. We favour a voluntary approach and we are working hard to find the best solutions that meet environmental needs whilst being as least burdensome as possible for farmers.”

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