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Press Release

The European Commission must support the sustainability efforts of all its agricultural productions through its future promotion policy

Today in Brussels, a meeting of the Parliamentary Intergroup "Wine, Spirits, and Quality Foodstuffs" was held. The debate focused on the evolution of the EU promotion policy after 2022. An opportunity to recall some important facts: it would be incomprehensible if the European Commission decided to exclude certain sectors such as wine or meat, when these products are an integral part of our culinary heritage.

The meeting of the Parliamentary Intergroup on Wine, Spirits, and Quality Foodstuffs took place in the context of a growing debate on the future of the EU's agricultural promotion policy, particularly with regard to the role of spirits and meat products¹. The European Commission has opened a public consultation which will be closed on the 23rd of June to determine the guidelines of its revised Promotion Policy in the context of the Farm to Fork Strategy.

On the occasion of this conference, Copa-Cogeca, through its Promotion Policy Chairman Jerzy Wierzbicki, recalled some essential facts on the subject, *"The EU promotion policy has been a great tool to promote SMEs and EU farmer's products, at national, European and international level. Few people know that if our parmesans and camembert's (of the EU culinary heritage), sausages, hams and wines are so celebrated in the world it is partly thanks to this policy. If this support stops on certain products such as meat or wine, it will simply benefit the large multinationals capable of global marketing and the share of imports. On the other hand, what message would this send to our fellow livestock farmers and winegrowers who work silently and daily to improve the sustainability of their farms? Beyond the political posturing, the signal sent would simply be deleterious and counterproductive on the ground."*

This echoes the letter signed by over 64 MEPs calling for support for all agricultural production². At the initiative of this letter and the inter-group meeting, MEP Irene Tolleret (Renew, FR) said, *"We do not change a policy that works and the European promotion policy has proved its worth. Our farmers are affected by COVID-19, Brexit, US sanctions, we must support them by maintaining the promotion budget without excluding any product and by enhancing our GIs in particular."*

This approach is supported by Copa-Cogeca, but also by the main organisations representing agricultural production (AREFLH, AVEC, CELCAA, CLITRAVI, EDA, EUROPATAT, FRESHFEL). Consumers and producers must not be fooled, what is at stake behind this whole subject of promotion is the vision for our future food system. Are we going to neglect part of our culinary heritage moulded by generations of farmers in favour of synthetic food? Everyone has

¹ <https://copa-cogeca.eu/Archive/Download?id=3885456&fmt=pdf>

² <https://irenetolleret.eu/actualites/1436/lettre-a-m-janusz-czeslaw-wojciechowski-commissaire-en-charge-de-l-agriculture>

their own vision today, but there is one simple fact: once our skills and farms are lost, it will be difficult to turn back.

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Translations will be available in DE, ES, FR, IT, PL and RO on the Copa-Cogeca website soon.

For further information, please contact:

Bruno Menne
Policy Advisor
Bruno.Menne@copa-cogeca.eu

Jean-Baptiste Boucher
Communications Director
Mobile: + 32 474 840 836
jean-baptiste.boucher@copa-cogeca.eu

CDP(21)3011:1
