

PUB(13)490:1

### **Copa-Cogeca Conference on a strong EU budget 2014-20 for a good Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)**

Ahead of EU heads of state decision on the future EU budget 2014-20 (MFF), which is sought on February 7-8 2013, members of Copa-Cogeca, European farmers and European agri-cooperatives will gather on February 6 for a high-level meeting in Brussels with around 400 people to press for a strong CAP with a good budget behind it. A major press conference will follow. High level speakers will attend the event. The only item on the agenda will be the MFF. Copa-Cogeca will be sending a clear, joint message in favour of a strong CAP budget to heads of state and governments, media and EU institutions. Farmers across Europe are united in their call for a strong CAP budget, in response to society's demands for safe, secure, sustainably produced high quality food supplies at affordable prices.

Agriculture is also a key driver to growth and employment in rural areas and has knock on effects in other sectors. Farm incomes are less than half the average level. Further cuts in agriculture spending are therefore totally unacceptable. Without the CAP, there would be 27 separate agriculture policies in the 27 member states which would cost governments far more than the CAP does. Agricultural spending, which is less than 1% of public expenditure, must be kept at current levels until 2020 to ensure that we have a viable sector to meet growing food demand and boost growth and employment in EU rural areas.