

02/04/2020

Press Release

In the turmoil, Copa and Cogeca ask the European Commission to put in place exceptional measures for fruit and vegetables

Anticipating mounting difficulties for fruit and vegetable growers and their cooperatives linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, Copa and Cogeca sent a letter today to the European Commission, listing proposals to adapt the Community aid scheme in this sector. Copa and Cogeca ask for exceptional measures to be put forward and the administrative management rules of operational programmes to be adjusted.

In a letter addressed to the DG AGRI Director-General today, Copa and Cogeca express their deep concerns over the current and future situation of the fruit and vegetable sector, which is particularly affected by the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic containment measures. There are already serious disruptions to demand for certain types of production (strawberries, vegetables, etc.), from specific regions or for certain customers. The marketing of fruit and vegetables as well as the delivery of fruit and vegetables destined for the processing industry may become more complicated as a result of growing problems in the availability of labour, the transportation of goods and input, the movement of people, and changes in demand and consumption.

Given the labour shortages, which mean that sufficient numbers of agricultural workers need to be made available quickly, and the highly perishable nature of these products, Copa and Cogeca's fears are growing. *"Copa and Cogeca call for exceptional measures to be made available to all affected fruit and vegetable growers and for adjustments to the administrative management rules of operational programmes of producer organisations to reduce the constraints that they are currently experiencing"* said Luc Vanoirbeek, Chairman of the Working Party on Fruit and Vegetables.

"With this unbalanced market situation spreading across several EU agricultural sectors, Copa and Cogeca ask the Commission to allocate a dedicated budget that falls outside the CAP budget." said Pekka Pesonen, Copa and Cogeca Secretary General.

Copa and Cogeca would like to emphasise that the COVID-19 pandemic will have longer lasting negative effects on the fruit and vegetable sector. The Commission, therefore, should take further steps now as these decisions will shape the future of the sector for months and years to come.

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To learn more about the technical measures proposed by fruit and vegetable producer organisations, you can access the full content of the letter [HERE](#).

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CDP(20)2217:1
