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Press Release

COPA COGECA WELCOMES EU COMMISSION MOVE TO SUPPORT EU AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN RESPONSE TO RUSSIAN BAN ON AGRI-FOOD EXPORTS

Copa-Cogeca welcomed today the move by European Agriculture Commissioner Ciolos to help support the EU farm sector in response to the crisis hitting the sector as a result of the Russian ban on agricultural products. Copa President Albert Jan Maat urged the Commission for swift implementation of the measures to avoid a further deterioration of the market.

Albert Jan Maat warned "Prices for perishable products like fruit, vegetables and fresh dairy produce are already being badly affected by the crisis, seeing prices drop by over 50% in some cases. Prices for other products targeted by the ban are also coming under severe pressure".

He continued "We therefore welcome the European Commission initiative discussed by Member States today in the Management Committee to take action. We have been calling for this and will help the Commission in giving market information".

Copa-Cogeca is calling for implementation of extraordinary market measures such as withdrawing products from the market and sending them to for example charities, accelerating the date of payment for direct payments, speeding up promotion campaigns to stimulate new demand and accelerating some free trade agreements with non-EU countries to open their markets".

The Russian ban will hit the farming sector badly well beyond one year. Copa-Cogeca is already estimating the extent of the damage.

Cogeca President Mr Pees stressed "First indications show that costs be much greater than the €400 million foreseen in the CAP crisis fund. This situation is not the fault of the agri-food industry but it is our sector that is being hit the most. The support must consequently not be financed out of the CAP budget only but also from other funds. Given the magnitude of this crisis, monitoring the profit margins in the food chain will also be of major importance to reduce speculation. The Commission must also ensure that measures are coordinated between member states and ensure that extra national funds are released to face the crisis".

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