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## Press Release

### **COPA-COGECA STEPS UP CALLS FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR EU FARM SECTOR IN RESPONSE TO RUSSIAN BAN, AS POLISH FARMERS TAKE TO THE STREETS**

Copa-Cogeca stepped up its calls today for additional support for the EU agriculture sector in response to the ban imposed by Russia on EU agricultural exports, warning producers livelihoods are threatened and prices are hitting rock-bottom.

The move came as Polish farmers took to the streets today in Brussels calling for additional support.

Copa-Cogeca welcomes the EU Commission action to support the EU fruit and vegetables sector, but with EU producer prices falling by 50% in some cases, the aid package will not be enough. Other sectors being hit by the ban like the dairy sector will also need support.

Copa-Cogeca Secretary-General Pekka Pesonen warned. “Around 10% of our exports are sent to Russia, worth 11 billion euros annually, and the support allocated so far is not nearly enough to compensate fruit and vegetable producers for the effects of it. Additional aid is needed to prevent the market from spiraling out of control, causing further damage to the economy. I offer my deepest support to the Polish fruit and vegetable producers who are demonstrating in Brussels today. This follows a protest by Spanish farmers and agri-cooperatives over the weekend. The ban is hitting many countries across Europe hard. Farmers and agri-cooperatives are already confronted by serious challenges like poor weather and this is the last thing they need. The dispute is not our fault yet its our sector that is being hit the most”.

Copa-Cogeca is calling for implementation of extraordinary market measures if the market justifies it, accelerating the date of payment for direct payments, speeding up promotion campaigns to stimulate new demand and finding new market outlets for the produce like in China and the Middle East.

Initial estimates show that the damage will be much bigger than the €400 million available in the CAP crisis fund. The support must consequently not be financed out of the CAP budget only but also from other funds.

Copa and Cogeca Presidents together with Presidents of the national farm organisations and cooperatives from across Europe will be gathering in Brussels next week to examine the extent of the damage and discuss what further action is needed. This is just before EU Ministers meet on September 5. We also urge the Commission and Members to offer support for the dairy sector, which has seen prices plummet in some countries, when they meet this Thursday to discuss the situation.

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