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Press Release

Cooperatives: power of digitalisation in unleashing potential of agriculture and agri-food chain underlined #AgriCoopForum

Cogeca, the voice of European agri-cooperatives, called for a coherent EU strategy to promote the digital transformation of the agri-food chain at a Business Presidency Forum in Brussels today.

At the high-level event, the pivotal role of agricultural cooperatives in driving the sector towards digital transformation was underlined.

Opening the event, Cogeca President Thomas Magnusson said “Digital technologies can help to achieve a more sustainable and competitive agriculture sector. Failure to uptake many innovative technologies on farms in the past have been down to the size of the farm, a lack of training or the high investments required. Agri-cooperatives can help their farmer owners overcome these challenges”.

Key findings of the study on "Agricultural cooperatives and digital technology" were presented by senior agricultural experts from Price Waterhouse at the Forum, who outlined the impact on the sector and the strategic challenges arising. Experts and representatives from Danish Agro, DRV Germany, DCoop Andalusia, GAIA EPICHEIREIN and the Fresh Produce Center also shared their insights and presented the different initiatives that agri-cooperatives are underpinning across Europe.

Coordinator of the Business Presidency Fora and representative of Coop de France Christian Péés said "Digitalisation and the efficient use of big data are revolutionising business models and processes in the agri-food chain. Digital technologies have given new momentum to the traceability of food and consumer information. Whilst new markets are developing, we need to strategically address the challenges and seize the opportunities, to better understand consumer behaviour and expectations, as well as to improve B2B relations along the chain".

Outlining ways to maximize the potential of the sector via digitalization, Mr Magnusson called for a coherent EU strategy to promote a digital transformation of the agri-food sector. We need the right infrastructures and access to broadband and satellite to solve the digital divide. The current legal framework for the collection, use and exchange of agricultural data is quite complex and fragmented. We need to develop a code of conduct on agricultural data sharing. Training and education is also essential”, he concluded.

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