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Press Release

USA protectionist move on Spanish olive imports unacceptable

Copa and Cogeca regret the U.S. Department of Trade move this week to uphold its decision to impose duties on Spanish table olives, and urged the EU to take action against this protectionist action.

Copa and Cogeca Secretary-General Pekka Pesonen said “We are very disappointed about the way in which this trade dispute is escalating. It will be detrimental to farmers on both sides of the Atlantic and will also deprive USA consumers of quality Spanish produce”.

Spanish olives will now face total taxes of 34.75% to enter the U.S. market, after the U.S. Department of Commerce confirmed its decision to impose anti-subsidy and anti-dumping duties on Spanish table olive imports. This clearly amounts to protectionism as the main reason Spanish imports of black table olives are so competitive is because producers have been investing in innovative and sustainable techniques to improve their economic viability. Spanish imports have already faced additional duties totaling 21.6% since January this year, causing Spanish exports to the U.S. to drop by as much as 42.4% in the first quarter of 2018. This is having a terrible impact on the Spanish market, growth and jobs. The gap is also not being replaced by U.S. production but by a 33% increase in imports from Morocco, 50% from Egypt and 82% from Turkey.

“We welcome support from the EU Commission and heads of state on this issue. The CAP is non-trade distorting under WTO rules and it is consequently unacceptable to impose such duties. We call on the Commission to take proceedings in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) against this unlawful action. The Commission must also work on finding new markets for our quality produce to help offset the economic losses Spanish producers are facing”, Pesonen concluded

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