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Press Release

Council's strategic agenda should fully acknowledge agriculture's cross-cutting potential

In light of the European leaders' meeting today in Sibiu to discuss the European Council's 2019-2024 strategic agenda, Copa and Cogeca call on European heads of state to keep agriculture and forestry at the top of all EU agendas. This is essential considering the numerous challenges faced by the sector as well as the opportunities it offers – a vision that is expressed by European farmer and agri-cooperative organisations in a manifesto launched earlier this week.

According to Pekka Pesonen, the Copa and Cogeca Secretary General, *“On Europe Day, it is essential to remember that for the past 60 years, the Common Agricultural Policy has been the glue that holds the European project and agriculture together. A strong Europe needs strong agriculture, and strong agriculture needs Europe! Agriculture and forestry remain part of the solution for Europe as regards the two discussion areas defined by Mr Tusk: the external and internal dimensions. In their strategic agendas, it is essential that the Council but also the Parliament and the Commission keep the same or even increase the level of ambition when it comes to the primary sector's contribution to the EU.”*

Mr Pesonen's statement is echoed in the manifesto entitled [WeFarm4EU](#), released by the European farmer and agri-cooperative organisations earlier this week. It highlights the cross-cutting role of agriculture and the importance of the coming political cycle for the farming community. For Copa and Cogeca, the EU will have the potential to define the very shape of the European farming model by 2024. Indeed, the Union will have to propose solutions to critical issues like generational renewal, low farm incomes, future agronomic practices, market volatility and the effects of climate change.

Copa and Cogeca believe that in return for this support, EU farmers and agri-cooperatives can help Europe become a champion of the bio-based economy and carbon sequestration.

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