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Ms Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European
Commission
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
BE-1049, Brussels

Brussels, 8th November 2019

Re: The EU model of production – stuck between uncertain and volatile international trade environment and incoherent EU policies

Dear Commission President-elect,

On behalf of our 22 million farmers and their family members as well as our 22 000 agricultural cooperatives, we would like to once again congratulate you for being elected President of the European Commission by the European Parliament!

The European farming community is dedicated to providing 500 million EU citizens with safe, nutritious, high-quality and affordable food every day.

However, farmers are facing an increasingly difficult situation. Farmers' protests in many Member States, most recently in France, Germany, the Netherlands and Poland, point out the blame that is unfairly pinned on farmers. In addition to this agri-bashing, EU farmers are paying the high price for other international policy developments, such as the Russian embargo, Brexit and the WTO panel disputes. Let us assure you that we do not advocate any disruption to international trade.


Furthermore, while we fully support the ongoing CAP reform process, we fear that once again the outcome would be increased red tape and poorer economic results for the farmers. This would have serious consequences for our future, bearing in mind the need to combat environmental challenges like climate change with dramatically reduced numbers of young farmers entering the sector.

Nonetheless, we strongly believe that agriculture and forestry can provide long-term solutions, in particular through the common EU policies, such as the Green Deal Initiative. The difficulty is to manage this in an increasingly open, global economy where the expectations of our European citizens and the international market reality do not always coincide. We need strong, adequately financed EU policies and public support to make this happen. Farmers will enable the EU to manage the transition to the circular and bio-based economy. In fact, strong agriculture would be a pre-condition to a strong Europe.

We approach you in the spirit of collaboration. It is in our common interest that your new team succeeds in introducing an ambitious political programme that would improve all of our lives. Copa and Cogeca remain committed to the European ideal and in doing so, we will support you in your challenging role as the President of the Commission.

We would be honoured to have an exchange of views with you on these topics in the near future.

Yours sincerely,



Joachim Rukwied
President of Copa



Thomas Magnusson
President of Cogeca

Cc: President Juncker, Commissioner Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner Phil Hogan