

31/01/2020

STATEMENT ON UK'S DEPARTURE FROM THE EU

With UK's departure from the EU today, the farming sectors cannot but lament the loss of their participation in the future of the EU and its farming related policies. While we fully respect the decision of the UK citizens, we still deeply regret the outcome that has brought us to this day.

We acknowledge the significant efforts of the EU and the UK negotiating teams in securing the ratification of the Withdrawal Agreement and the Political Declaration, as it represents an important step forwards for the future relationship. The EU and the UK must ensure that a "cliff-edge" situation following the transition period is avoided, as it would be devastating for European and British farmers and agri-cooperatives.

Pekka Pesonen, Copa and Cogeca Secretary General underlined on this occasion that *"European Farmers and their cooperatives now expect the future relationship negotiation process to be handled in a swift and orderly manner, with sufficient time provided to achieve a high-quality outcome. During this period the European Union must defend its integrity as well as the Single Market. We hope to keep a close relationship with British farmers and we hope that both sides will have farmers best interest at heart."*

With the future trade agreement negotiations starting in March, Copa and Cogeca members hope that the EU and the UK will maintain the closest possible trading relationship, while preserving the value of the EU market and the high standards of production that characterise our farming system. Any divergence in production standards in the UK would undermine the possibility of negotiations to aim for zero tariffs. It is therefore crucial that the future agreement provides guarantees against unfair competition and protects the integrity of the EU Single Market.

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