



Press Release – 8 November 2011

URGENT CALL FOR PERMANENT SOLUTIONS TO THE INCREASING LACK OF AVAILABILITY OF PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS FOR MINOR USES AND SPECIALITY CROPS IN EUROPE

At a major Conference organised by 10 agri-food chain associations, participants called for concrete solutions and proper investment schemes to support minor uses and speciality crops and to improve the availability of tailor made solutions for their protection.

“Minor uses” particularly applies to fruits and vegetables, cereals, seeds, flowers and plants that need a tailor made pesticide product for their protection, whether it is for growing them, storage or transportation. There is a foreseeable reduction in available solutions for their protection, posing difficulties for their cultivation.

The conference, including the EU Commission, recognised the vital need for EU consumers to have access to a wide range of agricultural and food products at an affordable price. It recognised as well the value of EU agricultural production for minor uses and specialty crops which represents about 20-22% of the value of the EU total agricultural production and the strategic importance for Europe to preserve these sectors.

The conference agreed that with EU food security and the competitiveness of the whole agri-food chain under threat, the reduction in active substances and available solutions which is foreseen cannot be ignored any longer. A study on minor uses requested by the Commission also confirmed that the new Regulation 1107/2009 is not expected to solve the majority of the issues.

Participants at the conference have reached a general consensus upon the following points:

- **An EU Minor Use Programme is a must**

An EU Minor Use and Speciality Crops Programme should address better knowledge management and communication between authorities and the agri-food chain as well as funding for EU projects leading to solutions. A coordinating center organising the work done in member states with the entire agri-food chain is crucial.

- **Commission ready to take the lead**

DG SANCO will communicate the needs of the minor uses community to other Directorates and particularly DG Research. It is important to set up the right framework for coordination and cooperation of activities for finding solutions for minor uses and speciality crops. DG SANCO also encouraged stakeholders to contact DG Research directly.

- **Practical solutions are possible:**

Several concrete solutions, as developed¹ by the 10 agri-food chain associations, can dramatically improve the situation:

- an EU database on products and uses authorised at Member State level because there is currently little exchange of knowledge among Member States;
- greater use of mutual recognition of active substances authorized at Member State level;

¹ Agri-Food Chain Partners Joint View on the need to fund initiatives to support speciality crops and minor uses authorisations, February 2011.

- common protocols for simplified studies on minor uses and speciality crops because a number of simplified studies accepted by some Member States are not accepted by others;
- funding for the EU working groups on minor uses

“This conference offered a clear and concrete understanding of the situation and problems that the whole agri-food chain is facing. We look forward to seeing the European Commission take the only appropriate steps forward, which should be reflected in the next Commission report expected in December 2011” said Luc Peeters, chairman of the phytosanitary group within COPA-COGECA and speaking on behalf of the 10 agri-food chain associations co-organising the event.

“This is a unique opportunity that we cannot afford to miss. As encouraged by the Commission itself, we call again on DG SANCO and all relevant Directorates of the European Commission (DG Agriculture and Rural Development, DG Research, DG Enterprise and Industry, DG Competition, DG Trade, and DG Budget), to come up with an effective EU Minor Use and Speciality Crops Programme. Otherwise, there would be significant negative long-term consequences for sustainable agriculture and food security in Europe”.

Contacts:

AREFLH

Assemblée des Régions Européennes
Fruitières, Légumières et Horticoles
www.areflh.com

Jacques Dasque
areflh@aquitaine.fr
+33 556 48 88 48

COCERAL Comité du Commerce des
céréales, aliments du bétail, oléagineux,
huile d'olive, huiles et graisses et
agrofouritures www.coceral.com

Gloria Gabellini
secretariat@coceral.com
+32 (0)2 502 08 08

ECPA European Crop Protection
Association www.ecpa.eu

Euros Jones
Euros.jones@ecpa.eu
+32 (2) 663 15 53

Kalila Hajjar
kalila.hajjar@ecpa.eu
+32 (0)2 663 15 68

FRESHFEL European Fresh Produce
Association www.freshfel.org

Frédéric Rosseneu
info@freshfel.org
+32 (0)2 777 15 80

IBMA International Biocontrol
Manufacturers Association [www.ibma-
global.org](http://www.ibma-global.org)

David Cary
david.cary@ibma-global.org
+44 777 551 48 40

CELCAA European Liaison Committee of
Agricultural and Agri-Food Trade
www.celcaa.eu

Bernd Gruner
info@celcaa.eu
+32 (0)2 230 03 70

ESA European Seed Association
www.euroseeds.org

Garlich von Essen
vonEssen@euroseeds.org
+32 (0)2 743 28 60

COPA-COGECA European Farmers and European
Agri-Cooperatives www.copa-cogeca.eu

Pasquale Di Rubbo
Pasquale.DiRubbo@copa-cogeca.eu
+ 32 (0)2 287 27 45

Amanda Cheesley
Amanda.cheesley@copa-cogeca.eu
+32 (0) 2 287 27 90

PROFEL European Association of Fruit
and Vegetable Processors [www.profel-
europe.eu](http://www.profel-
europe.eu)

Susanne Meyer
smeyer@agep.eu
+32 (0)2 743 40 59

Union Fleurs International Flower Trade
Association www.unionfleurs.org

Sylvie Mamias
secgen@unionfleurs.org
+32 2 231 06 38