



PRESS RELEASE

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Ahead of the EU-Mercosur third round of negotiations starting on 3rd July 2017, CELCAA highlighted its interests for a balanced agreement to the European Parliament. Speaking at a breakfast-debate co-organised with Copa-Cogeca on 21st June 2017 and hosted by MEP Sofia Ribeiro (EPP/PORT) and MEP Daniel Caspary (EPP/Germany), Celcaa experts had the opportunity to exchange on their priorities in the negotiations, in particular on ways to tackle SPS barriers to access Mercosur market and the priority to protect sensitive products.

On 21st June 2017, Celcaa and Copa-Cogeca organised a joint breakfast-debate on the opportunities and challenges for the EU agricultural sector of a trade deal with Mercosur. CELCAA reiterated the importance of protecting sensitive products and the priority to dismantle the SPS barriers impeding EU exports to Mercosur, in parallel to the market access negotiations. CELCAA in particular called for a strong SPS chapter in the EU-Mercosur FTA including clear and predictable deadlines and processes for authorisation to export to Mercosur countries.

Talking to many representatives of Committees for Agriculture and International Trade, as well as to representatives of Mercosur delegation, CELCAA was pleased to see the high interest demonstrated by Members of European Parliament on this subject.

MEP Sofia Ribeiro stated: *"The protection of European PDOs and PGIs must be ensured by avoiding counterfeiting and competing brands/copies of our products, leading the consumer to deceit".*

In his capacity of Vice-President of CELCAA Ignacio Sanchez-Recarte, Secretary General of Comité Européen des Entreprises Vin (CEEV) stressed that *"there is still a lot of progress to make to conclude a balanced deal. In particular, Mercosur needs to dismantle the many barriers to entry into their market that impede EU agricultural exports while being realistic on their market access ambition for sensitive products. I am pleased to see that these negotiations raise a lot of interests from Members of European Parliament and Celcaa is committed to provide any technical expertise that INTA or COMAGRI deserve".*

Miguel Ceballos-Baron, Deputy Head of Cabinet of Trade Commissioner Malmström presented the state of play of the negotiations and stressed that *"The Free Trade Agreement we are negotiating with Mercosur is a challenge but a great opportunity. Today our exporters pay €4.4bn in tariff duties per year. Eliminating these tariffs and other non-tariff barriers is our objective. This agreement would also give us the benefit of being first comers, as Mercosur has not concluded any FTA with other countries, giving the EU an additional advantage in such a big market. At the same time, the Commission is fully aware of the sensitivities in some agricultural EU products and will not fully liberalize those, but make trade in these products subject to quotas. In parallel, the agreement will contain a modern and state of the art chapter on sanitary and phytosanitary rules to ensure effective access for our food and agriculture products while maintaining the high food safety standards that citizens enjoy in the EU".*

MEP Daniel Caspary concluded that *"after years of stagnation, there is momentum for decisive progress in the EU-Mercosur negotiations. An agreement promises many benefits for the EU, especially when it comes to key agricultural products, such as wine, cereals, pasta or olive oil. CELCAA's constant input has been vital in incorporating the practical every-day concerns of organisations."*

CELCAA is the EU umbrella association representing EU organisations covering the trade in cereals, grains, oils and fats, sugar, fruit and vegetables, olive oil, agro-supply, animal feed, wine, meat and meat products, dairy and dairy products, eggs and egg products, poultry and game, tobacco, spices, cut flowers and plants and general produces. Members include CEEV, CIBC, COCERAL, EUCOLAIT, EUWEP, FETRATAB, GAFTA, SACAR and UECBV. CELCAA's main objectives are to facilitate understanding of European decision-makers and stakeholders on the role played by the European traders in agri-products; to act as a platform of dialogue and communication with the European Institutions and to encourage public and general interests in agri-trade issues.

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