Minor uses and specialty crops: the voice of European farmers and their cooperatives

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Who are Copa and Cogeca?

**Copa – European farmers**
Bringing together 60 EU farmers’ organisations

**Cogeca – European agri-cooperatives**
Bringing together 35 EU agricultural cooperative organisations

- representing 13 million farmers and their families
- as well as around 38,000 cooperatives
- among the biggest and most active interest representations in Brussels
2. Minor uses and Specialty crops in EU

Why so important?
Minor uses and Specialty crops in EU why so important?

Magnitude of impact of pest problems similar to major crops;

High speciality crops mostly on high specialised farms;

Economical impact on farm level is very high

Specialty crops include most vegetables, fruits, nurseries and flowers - account for an EU production value of greater than €60 billion per year;

Represent more than 20% of the value of EUs total agricultural production;

➢ Minor use should be the major concern
Minor uses and Specialty crops in EU why so important?

From consumers’ perspective:

- Often zero tolerance on the quality of products, even on visual aspects;
- Availability of EU produce at affordable price;
- Specialty crops provide diversity in diet: wide range of variety;
- Locally grown products often missing;
Minor uses and Specialty crops in EU why so important?

From growers’ perspective:

- Concern for the implementation of IPM principles if tools are missing;
- Resistance build up if no rotation in active substances;
- Crop rotation will become problematic;
- Introduction of new crops needs – locally grown needs GAP solutions too
- Market access determined by MRL restrictions
3. Minor uses and Specialty crops in EU: what’s at the stake?
Minor uses and Specialty crops in EU
what’s at the stake?

1. Lack of active substances at MS level due to the costs of the registration process;
2. Off-label use authorisation represents often the solution;
3. Duplication of work and money involved in different member states;
4. Distortion of competition at EU level
5. Distortion of competition with third country imports
4. The EU fund on minor uses and specialty crops
Minor uses and Specialty crops in EU
Progress is needed !!!

BRUSSELS DECLARATION – nov 2009

1. EU database on products and use authorisations in EU
2. Common approach to product authorisation extensions for minor uses and specialty crops
3. Developing simplified minor use protocols at EU level
4. Facilitate mutual recognition
Which are the effects on minor uses and specialty crops of Reg. 1107/2009?

- Effects on minor uses and specialty crops depend on:
  - how the zonal system works in practice;
  - how mutual recognition is applied;
- If a true zonal system is established then this could very helpful;
- The risk is that national authorities may still require efficacy data on the registration system;
- Acceptance of biological efficacy data from other countries is essential.
The EU fund on minor uses and specialty crops
Copa-Cogeca views

EU fund is essential in order to:

- Coordinate approach/cooperation
  (rough figures claim that 30-60 Million EUR are used across MSs to find solutions)
- Support field trials
- Find strategies where no PPP are available
- Promote alternative solutions (e.g. Biological PPP)
- Sharing of info (database with problems/solutions, statistics)
- Bring all kind of expertise together (who is doing what)
- Facilitate registration
The EU fund on minor uses and specialty crops – which level of coordination?

- **EU coordination** but the work should be carried out at zonal group level – build up on existing structure

- **Farmers in the heart of discussions** – bottom up approach

- Dedicated secretariat to coordinate such activities

- Coordination with third country programs (e.g. IR-4): including data sharing, crop grouping, world wide mutual recognition
The EU fund on minor uses and specialty crops: where are we?

- European Commission’s timetable looks very disappointing - farmers need solutions now!

- Rumors in Brussels about the Commission proposals are not very promising

- Polish Presidency of the European Council plays a key role to prepare the interinstitutional debate at EU level
5. Short term solutions
The EU fund on minor uses and specialty crops short term solutions

Copa-Cogeca is involved in facilitating the setting up of expert groups on fresh vegetables and ornamentals under the umbrella of the existing technical working groups

- Important to continue working together
- Bring all kind of expertise together
- Do not loose trust among MS experts
- Save time and money involved
- Optimise solutions in the short term
6. Economic situation at farm level
EU Commission’s Communication (2009) on “A better functioning food supply chain in Europe”: an *unequal bargaining power has a negative impact on the competitiveness of the food supply chain as smaller but efficient actors may be obliged to operate under reduced profitability, limiting their ability and incentives to invest in improved product quality and innovation of production processes*”
The “cost-price squeeze”: since 1996, agricultural output prices have increased on average by 1.1% each year while input prices have increased by 2.9% in nominal terms.
Some concrete facts to keep in mind (III)

1. 65% of EU farms are unable to cover all their production costs (i.e. remuneration of own factors included)

2. CAP support represents two-thirds of farmers’ incomes

3. Excessive price volatility for agricultural products severely hampered by the competitiveness of the sector

4. Farmers’ incomes equate to less than half an average salary

**No additional costs at farm level – farmers already contribute to the investments needed to get inputs on the market (e.g. R&D);**
7. Farmers’ expectations
Farmers’ expectations

1. PPP tool box must be available for all crops at all time
2. Facilitate IPM implementation in a cost effective manner
3. Resistance management should remain possible: need for availability of multiple PPP in multiple mode of action
4. Cost reduction by sharing work load
6. PPP industry and authorities should provide farmers with solutions to ensure plant health at farm level
Invitation

Save the date: 7th November 2011 (14.30 – 18.00)

Venue: COPA-COGECA office - Brussels

“Conference on specialty crops and minor uses“

Organising committee:
Enjoy the benefits of EU agriculture

Thanks a lot for your attention