



Mr Janusz Wojciechowski
 Commissioner for Agriculture
 and Rural Development
 European Commission
 Rue de la Loi,
 200B-1049
 Brussels

Brussels, 8th November 2022

Re: Agri-food sectors call for an inclusive 2023 Annual Work Programme of the Promotion Policy and the rapid publication of the Commission proposal for the revision of Regulation 1144/2014

Dear Commissioner Wojciechowski,

The 17 European agri-food sector organisations listed below would like to express to you their joint call for:

1. **An inclusive 2023 Annual Work Programme (AWP)** that does not discriminate against any type of EU agricultural product or sector.
2. **The rapid publication of the Commission proposal** for the revision of Regulation 1144/2014 on the Promotion of EU agricultural products.

An inclusive 2023 AWP

As expressed during the several exchanges that we had the pleasure to have with you over the past two years, we believe that the **EU Promotion Policy should be inclusive and remain open to all EU agricultural products and sectors as listed in Regulation 1144/2014, including red and processed meat and alcohol drinks.** We are thus extremely appreciative of the strong support you have given to the vision of an inclusive Promotion Policy open to all agricultural sectors as you expressed during our meeting on 27th January 2022 and all over this past year.

We were thus **surprised to see that the Commission's draft proposal for the 2023 AWP,**

presented for a vote to the the promotion section of the Committee of Common Organisation of Agricultural Markets (CMO Committee) on 28th October 2022, **was including the same discriminatory award sub-criterion** in Annex 2, under the “Relevance” award criterion than already introduced in the 2022 AWP. To state that *“For proposals targeting the internal market, alignment with the objectives of Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan, in particular encouraging the shift to a more plant-based diet, with less red and processed meat and other foods linked to cancer risks (e.g. alcoholic drinks)”* is directly discriminating red and processed meat as well as alcohol drinks which will be counterproductive to encourage those sectors to further improve their sustainability. This would be highly detrimental considering that the livestock sector represents 45% of the total agricultural activity in the EU and generates direct jobs for 4 million people and indirectly supports the work of 30 million people, while wine production represents more than 3 million jobs¹, both mostly in rural areas². **A consideration that is clearly shared by a majority of Member States considering that 10 of them decided to vote against this proposal while 14 others were so troubled by it that they at least decided to abstain.** This is a historical vote as never such an opposition has been expressed by Member States since the creation of the Promotion Policy. It is also interesting to note that this vote is also aligned with the message expressed at the Agri-Fish Council of 21st February 2022, when an overwhelming majority of Member States (more than 20) clearly stated their opposition to discriminating against any specific sector or product in the EU Promotion Policy.

Moreover, in relation to the European Beating Cancer Plan call to reduce the promotion of red meat, we would like to redirect you the **Dublin Declaration that you also supported on Twitter³**. This declaration clearly shows how **important it is to listen to the whole scientific community and that policy directions cannot be based on a single study as is the European Beating Cancer Plan**. We also would like to underline that the **objective** of the Promotion Policy for red and processed meat or alcohol **is not to increase the overall consumption of those products, but to ensure that consumers choose EU products over third country products with lower safety and sustainability requirements.**

The agri-food sectors, in alignment with Member States, thus call on you to continue your current engagement for an inclusive EU Promotion Policy and remove any discriminatory award sub-criterion from the 2023 AWP.

The Rapid publication of the Commission’s proposal for the revision of the EU Promotion Policy

In the context of the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Inception Impact Assessment (IIA) for the revision of the EU Promotion Policy was launched last year. At the time, it was announced that the Commission would issue its **legislative proposal in the course of the first quarter of 2022**. Since then, a full impact assessment was completed which, to the best of our knowledge, has already been officially approved by the Regulatory Scrutiny Board. At the last meeting of the Quality and Promotion Civil Dialogue Group on 1st April 2022, it was announced that the Commission proposal would be published in June 2022. **We are now in November and the proposal has still not been published.** We are extremely concerned as **this uncertainty is discouraging producers from applying for promotion programmes** as they do not know if their sectors will still be supported by this policy. This is **especially the case for producers in Member States that have not been using the Promotion Policy so far** considering that applying requires from them an extra effort that they are not ready to make without at least the guarantee for their products to be eligible. This risks **compromising a better integration of the agricultural sectors of the Member States that have joined the EU more recently.** **We thus would like to stress the need for this proposal to be published as soon as possible.**

In the current context with COVID-19 and the economic tensions due the war in Ukraine, the need for the EU agri-food sector to benefit from some certainty and to have access to a promotion policy creating market opportunities is especially important. We, therefore, hope that the Commission

¹ https://www.ceev.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Brochure_CEEV_-_High_resolution.pdf

² http://animaltaskforce.eu/Portals/0/ATF/Downloads/Facts%20and%20figures%20sustainable%20and%20competitive%20livestock%20sector%20in%20EU_FINAL.pdf

³ <https://www.dublin-declaration.org/>

will propose an inclusive 2023 AWP and publish their already long delayed proposal for an inclusive EU Promotion Policy as soon as possible. **We have truly appreciated your active engagement in defence of this successful EU policy and in keeping it open to all sectors.** This being the case, we are confident that you will ensure producers are provided with some certainty and are not discouraged from applying to future AWPs.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions. We would be delighted to further exchange with you on this topic.

We thank you for your attention!

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the following organisations:

AREFLH - The Assembly of European Fruit, Vegetable and Horticultural Regions

AREPO - Association of European Regions for Products of Origin

AVEC - Association of Poultry Processors and Poultry Trade in the EU countries

CEEV - Comité Européen des Entreprises Vins

CEJA - European Council of Young Farmers

CELCAA - European Liaison Committee for Agricultural and Agri-Food Trade

CEVI - European Confederation of Independent Winegrowers

CLITRAVI - Liaison Centre for the Meat Processing Industry in the European Union

Copa-Cogeca - The united voice of farmers and their cooperatives in the European Union

EDA - European Dairy Association

EFFAB - European Forum of Farm Animal Breeders

EFOW - European Federation of Origin Wines

EUROPATAT - European Potato Trade Association

FRESHFEL - European Fresh Produce Association

OriGin EU - The Organization for an International Geographical Indications Network

spiritsEUROPE - European representative body for producers of spirit drinks

UECBV - European Livestock and Meat Trade Unions

Cc:

Maciej Golubiewski, Head of Cabinet in Mr Wojciechowski's Cabinet

Roberto Berutti, Member of Cabinet in Mr Wojciechowski's Cabinet

Wolfgang Burtscher, Director-General DG AGRI

Michael Niejahr, (Acting) Deputy Director-General DG AGRI

Diego Canga Fano, Director DG AGRI (Directorate F)

Christina Gerstgrasser, Head of Unit DG AGRI