



To the Agricultural Permanent Representatives
to the European Union

Brussels, 9 July 2025

Object: EU Promotion Policy – Agri-food sector’s views regarding the Statement of Estimates of the European Commission for the financial year 2026

Dear Permanent Representative,

As the July 17 deadline approaches for Member States to submit their contributions to the European Commission (EC) Statement of Estimates for the 2026 Budget, the undersigned 18 European agri-food sector organisations wish to express their deep concerns regarding the EU promotion Policy for agricultural products.

We are particularly alarmed by the funding cuts to promotion activities under the EC’s direct management (MULTI-programmes) and its own initiatives, as confirmed by the European Commission’s 2026 [draft budget](#) published on 4 June.

Moreover, the European Commission’s proposal to maintain a **budget of €81 million for SIMPLE programmes in 2026 is clearly insufficient** to meet the sector’s demonstrated needs. In the 2025 Annual Work Programme, applications for SIMPLE programmes exceeded the available budget by 233,80%, confirming the strong and growing demand for support among EU producers. Maintaining this limited funding comes at a time when geopolitical instability and ongoing trade tensions are disrupting traditional trade flows and creating unprecedented challenges for the agri-food supply chain. In such a context, it is essential for the EU to step up its investment in the promotion of agricultural products to safeguard existing markets and seize new opportunities, rather than limiting the sector’s

potential with a constrained budget.

More troubling is the **renewed absence of funding for MULTI programmes**. MULTI programmes are essential to the EU Promotion Policy fostering cross-border cooperation and delivering a genuine EU-wide impact by allowing organisations from different Member States to work together and access markets they could not reach individually. In the 2025 Annual Work Programme, applications for MULTI programmes exceeded the available budget by 147,58%. **Removing this funding would deprive the policy of its European dimension and disproportionately penalise smaller Member States and beneficiaries who rely on these joint programmes**. It would also increase competition for the already oversubscribed SIMPLE budget, reducing applicants' chances of success and potentially discouraging participation.

Furthermore, the absence of a dedicated budget for the European Commission's own promotion initiatives will limit the EU's ability to open new markets through high-level trade missions and strategic campaigns. This is particularly problematic at a time when sustained international engagement is critically needed to improve the competitiveness of the EU agri-food sector.

The EU Promotion Policy has been very successful in achieving its primary objective, namely boosting the competitiveness of EU agri-food products and of all the sectors across the chain. We firmly believe that it must remain an inclusive policy, providing balanced support across all sectors.

We are counting on your support to reiterate our concerns to the EC.

Specifically, we urge you to support:

- A **higher budget for SIMPLE programmes** for agri-food actors to face the current challenges and remain competitive
- A **dedicated budget for MULTI programmes of at least 84 million** to foster partnership across Europe
- A **dedicated budget for the European Commission's own initiatives**

We would be delighted to engage in further exchanges with you on the matter should you have any queries or need any clarifications.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the following organisations:

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

AREPO – The 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

CEVI – The European Confederation of Independent Winegrowers

EDA – European Dairy Association

IBC – International Butchers' Confederation

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

EFOW – European Federation of Origin Wines

EFFAB – European Forum of Farm Animal Breeders

EUROPATAT – European Potato Trade Association

FOOD DRINK EUROPE – Organisation of Europe's food and drink industry

FRESHFEL EUROPE – European Fresh Produce Association

OrigIn EU – The EU Office of the Organization for an International Geographical Indications Network

SpiritsEUROPE – European representative body for producers of spirit drinks

Trade promotion Europe – One voice for European trade promotion

UECBV – European Livestock and Meat Trades Union