

**Future of the Agricultural Product Quality Policy
Czech Presidency High Level Conference
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**Copa-Cogeca:
The united voice of farmers and their
cooperatives in the European Union**

Who are Copa and Cogeca?

Copa – European farmers

Bringing together 61 EU farmers' organisations

Cogeca – European agri-cooperatives

Bringing together 35 EU agricultural cooperative organisations

Who are Copa and Cogeca?

Two organisations:

- representing 15 million people working full-time or part-time on EU farms
- representing around 40,000 cooperatives
- with links to other European countries
- among the biggest and most active interest representation groups in Brussels

The agricultural product quality policy is of utmost importance to European farmers

Farming requirements: overview

I. Introduction

Remarks on the role of the agricultural product quality policy within the Common Agriculture Policy

II. Our views

Key issue: how as farmers can we ensure consumers know what EU farming requirements are about? What is best way for communicating these information and meet consumers expectations?

III. Conclusions

Farming requirements – I. Introduction

- The agricultural product quality policy must be a part of the discussions on the future of the CAP and on the budget
- EU producers face increasing price volatility whilst competing with producers in Third Countries who operate under lower production costs and standards
- Farming is governed by a whole host of requirements and standards within the framework of cross-compliance – simplification needed

Farming requirements – I. Introduction

- The high farming requirements under cross-compliance must be applied equally in all Member States
- The EU must demand the same high standards of food imports from Third Countries
- Consumers want to be informed about the origin of *and* the methods used to produce (animal welfare) agricultural products

Farming requirements – II. Our views

1. General remarks

- We are very wary about the introduction of additional (EU) schemes and logos
- Improving the way in which existing schemes and logos operate should be the EU's *leitmotiv*



Farming requirements – II. Our views

2. Not in favour of a symbol/logo indicating compliance with EU farming requirements:

WHY?

- Such a logo could not make a clear distinction between EU/non-EU products
- Misleading information for consumers as non-EU products could be labelled with an “EU logo”
- Additional pressure on suppliers in the food chain



Farming requirements – II. Main Part

3. Compulsory indication of primary products' place of production: EU/non-EU

- Increase in transparency and consumer confidence
- This is *ONE* way to communicate on the quality of European production
- Monitor the relevance of setting EU definition of some farming methods such as mountain products, integrated farming

Farming requirements – II. Our views

4. Labelling of EU and/or the Member State:

- Farmers believe that the EU and the country of origin should be mandatory
- Agri-cooperatives are of the opinion that country of origin labelling should be voluntary

5. We are very supportive of the **existing vertical legislation on the marketing and quality of some EU commodities** (beef, fresh fruit and vegetables, fish, olive oil, wine, eggs, honey)

6. Need for EU-wide promotional campaigns

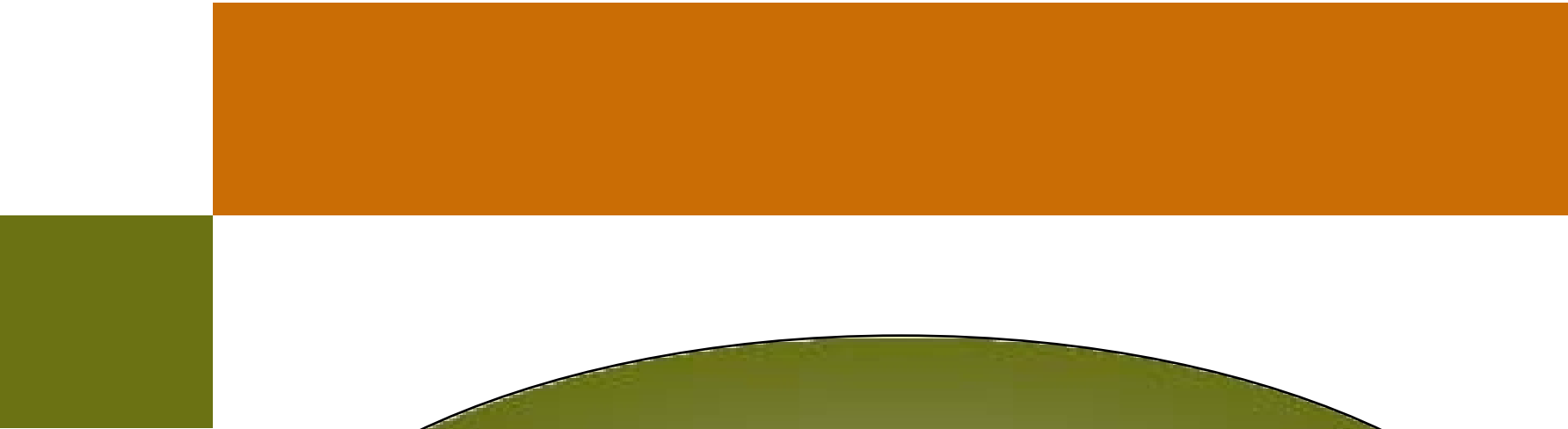
Farming requirements – III. Conclusions

1. Further new schemes/logos (sustainability, Eco-label, water and carbon footprint, welfare) would only create **more confusion** amongst consumers and lead to higher production costs for farmers
2. **Improve** existing (EU) schemes (e.g. Gis)

Farming requirements – III. Conclusions

3. Allocate **adequate** budgetary funds for information and promotional activities
4. EU producers can **only** benefit from logos as marketing tools **if** their role in the food chain is **strengthened** (e.g. private retail brands)
5. Quality policy creating employment in rural areas





Thank you!
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