

CIBE PRESS RELEASE

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European sugar beet growers worry about the availability of tools to allow efficient crop protection and improve sustainability

The International Confederation of European Beet Growers (CIBE) held its annual Technical and Reception Control Committee (TRCC) meeting in Saint-Quentin, France, on 24th of October, chaired by Krystof Nykiel, President of the Polish sugar beet growers' association KZPBC. This meeting was followed by a technical visit to [Betteravenir](#), Europe's largest outdoor exhibition & demonstration dedicated to sugar beet, on 25th of October in Berny-en-Santerre, France.

The CIBE TRCC meeting brought together more than a hundred representatives of sugar beet growers from all over Europe to discuss the major issues facing the sector. These include adapting to the impacts of climate change, to the objective of reduction of GHG emissions, to the drastic reduction of the number of active substances available for crop protection in Europe as well as looking at innovation in cultivation to cope with these numerous challenges. The use of weather and climate data, the new development of precision management tools, of gene editing technologies, and to a smaller extent of biological controls, were presented as tools for the future.

The contribution of experts from the ECMWF (European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts) and from technical beet institutes (ITB from France, IRS from The Netherlands and BBRO from the UK) as well as the active participation of growers in these technical exchanges show the commitment to actively and collectively seek solutions to improve the economic and environmental sustainability of their activities.

"Time is beginning to run out for our sector to develop new effective tools and practices to adapt to this context towards less inputs and to improve our sustainability. This is even becoming more challenging in the context of climate change and of the regulatory framework for a Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation (SUR) under discussion." said chair Krystof Nykiel.

European farmers are racing against the clock in the face of increasingly restrictive, contradictory and incoherent policies, particularly in the area of crop protection. The sector as a whole needs appropriate provisions and support to invest rapidly. Unprecise, non-science-based and hazard-based policies risk putting sugar beet cultivation in Europe into a technical dead-end. The EU Institutions need to wake up to this risk.

"The lack of coherence, the lack of pragmatism and the prevailing ideology at European but also national level are incomprehensible and unacceptable to us farmers, given the challenges we face in terms of competitiveness and sovereignty. It is also detrimental to the implementation of the green transition desired by public authorities" concluded Franck Sander, President of the French sugar beet growers' association CGB which hosted this meeting, who also conveyed this message to Minister of Agriculture of France Marc Fesneau during his visit to Betteravenir.

About CIBE

Gathers national and regional associations from 14 European beet-producing countries as well as the United-Kingdom and Switzerland. It represents and defends the livelihoods of 130 000 sugar beet growing farmers, for a total production of around 16 million tonnes in 2022.

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