

Confédération Internationale des Betteraviers Européens

INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG
EUROPÄISCHER RÜBENANBAUER

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION
OF EUROPEAN BEET GROWERS



CONFEDERACION INTERNACIONAL
DE REMOLACHEROS EUROPEOS

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P R E S S R E L A S E

CIBE CALLS FOR EXTREME FIRMNESS ON THE EUROPEAN UNION'S INTERNATIONAL TRADE CONCESSIONS

At its Annual General Assembly held in Brussels, the International Confederation of European Beet Growers (CIBE) drew up the following Press Release:

CIBE is very concerned by the latest compromises at the WTO Doha Round negotiations defined by the European Commission. CIBE considers these compromises are inconsistent with the Sugar Regime reform as adopted by the Council and the Parliament in 2005 and reconfirmed in 2007. Therefore, CIBE asks the Commission to be extremely firm on its sugar trade position.

The huge effort by the whole European community and by the sugar-beet sector in economic, human and financial terms (more than 6 billion euros allocated for it) will probably prove insufficient and unsustainable if the Commission does not remain inflexible on the trade concession proposals made to its trading partners.

The European Union is already the world's second biggest sugar importer. The result of the restructuring scheme in 2008 is the closure of 75 factories in Europe, unemployment for around ten thousand workers in rural areas, the end of sugar beet cultivation for around 46 000 farmers in several European countries and regions and a significant decrease (more than 30%) of both prices and quota production. This to achieve on time the objective fixed by the Commission in 2006.

CIBE urgently asks the Commission to remain coherent with this strong restructuring process. In particular on WTO, the Commission must be aware that:

- keeping the current Special Agricultural Safeguard Clause is an absolute necessity,
- the tariff reduction has to be consistent with the reformed Sugar CMO,
- keeping bound tariffs on sugar is essential,
- an appropriate list of tropical products (exclusion of sugar) and preferences erosion (inclusion of sugar) must be negotiated.

At this stage of the WTO negotiations, the treatment as sensitive product for sugar will lead to additional import quotas (TRQs) that are inconsistent with the CMO sugar reform.

The sugar-beet sector has taken its responsibility in terms of restructuring; the Commission must now take its own responsibility in international trade negotiations and respect the commitments it has undertaken.