

International Confederation of European Beet Growers

CONFEDERATION INTERNATIONALE
DES BETTERAVIERS EUROPEENS

CONFEDERAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE
DEI BIETICOLTORI EUROPEI



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EUROPEAN SUGAR BEET GROWERS OUTRAGED BY THE COMMISSION'S LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL ON SUGAR

The 160 000 European beet growers are shocked and outraged by the legislative proposal on sugar presented today by the European Commission. This proposal aims not only to get rid of all current provisions in the sugar sector by 2015, but also to bring down a dynamic and organised sector in Europe. This arbitrary, radical and unfounded proposal goes against any logic and contradicts the objectives the Commission has itself defined in its Communication in November 2010. Moreover, contrary to what the Commissioner D. Cioloş stated this morning during the Press Conference, the Council has never decided the end of the sugar quotas system, and certainly not during the CAP Health Check, from which sugar was excluded.

With this proposal, the Commission clearly proposes to EU beet growers, to the EU Institutions and to the EU citizens:

- an unfair functioning of the sugar supply chain and a decrease in growers' income,
- more beet sugar factory closures in Europe,
- destabilisation of the EU sugar market, increased price volatility and a threat to the security of sugar supply for EU consumers,
- to bring down one of the most valuable sustainable resources for green growth, green energy and bio-economy,
- to destroy the diversity in farming systems in many agricultural regions and betray the aim of a balanced territorial development in Europe.

This proposal is all the more incomprehensible in that the current sugar regime reinforces the sustainability of the sector and its competitiveness, contains tools acting as a bulwark against volatility of the sugar world market, ensures the supply of a high quality and sustainable product to European users and consumers, ensures growers a fair share of the added value and respects all the EU trade commitments, while being budget neutral. This is why European beet growers are strongly opposed to the Commission's proposal and call for the prolongation of the existing sugar market management measures, including quotas and the minimum beet price, until at least 2020.

The proposal presented today by the Commission is not justified by any objective economic argument and goes against the European Parliament's resolution on CAP 2020 voted in June 2011. The foolish path proposed by the Commission is a mistake and will not meet the future challenges for the EU beet sector. It is a threat to European beet growers and to the entire sector.

Nevertheless, the legislative co-decision procedure is now beginning and the other EU Institutions, in particular the Council and the European Parliament, will certainly express their views on the controversial choice of the EU Commission. All European beet growers will now actively take part in this debate and call on the Member States and the Members of the European Parliament to listen to their voice.

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