

International Confederation of European Beet Growers

CONFEDERATION INTERNATIONALE
DES BETTERAVIERS EUROPEENS
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CONFEDERAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE
DEI BIETICOLTORI EUROPEI



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European Beet Growers welcome progress of the discussions at EU Institutions' level

On 28 November 2012, at the Agri Council debate, 14 EU Member States representing almost 2/3 of the votes, and not 1/2 as stated by the Cypriot Presidency and the Commissioner D. Cioloş, clearly reiterated deep concerns at the European Commission's proposal to end the sugar regime and its sugar quota by 2015 and asked for its extension until 2020. European Beet Growers feel therefore supported and encouraged in their request to prolong the sugar provisions, including the current sugar quotas, at least up to 2020, and are confident that the future discussions at the Agri Council will confirm that it is the most appropriate direction, coherent with the CAP-reform objectives defined, so as to further improve the competitiveness of the EU beet sector in the medium-term.

European Beet Growers also follow attentively the debate at the European Parliament Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development which is due to vote by late January 2013 on the Draft report of M. Dantin. The current intensive discussions on compromise amendments will be completed in the coming weeks. In the light of these discussions, European Beet Growers remain vigilant and note that today a majority of Members of this Committee support the Draft report of M. Dantin which proposes to prolong the sugar provisions up to 2020, to consolidate the contractual framework between growers and processors and to introduce flexible measures so as to manage the European sugar market smoothly.

Since 2009 the European sugar market is fully open (quota-free, duty-free) to all ACP and LDC sugar cane producing countries. This liberalization process, unique among all developed countries, which took place in an unexpectedly turbulent time for world sugar markets, has brought volatility on the EU market. This necessitates both stability and flexible market measures so that the European market is supplied regularly at reasonable prices, and certainly not the elimination of these tools. However, the unjustified and unacceptable request of raw cane sugar refiners for a privilege of access to duty-free sugar from the world market, would upset the EU market balance, circumvent the preferential ACP/LDC partners and completely undermine the efforts (partially financed by public funding), investments and competitiveness of both the European beet sector and the ACP/LDC sugar sector.

Therefore, European Beet Growers call on the Agri Council and on the European Parliament to remain consistent in their future decisions while paying great attention to the unstable world sugar context and taking into consideration the comprehensive joint position expressed in early November 2012 by four major players of the sugar sector: the European beet growers, the European sugar producers, the European trade unions and the group of ACP/LDC countries (see [here](#)). These four stakeholders have proposed the best direction to ensure that the sugar sector can contribute to a smart, sustainable and inclusive future for Europe.