

# Food for Thought

*A vision for unlocking the potential of agriculture and the food industry in the EU*



## Key challenges and opportunities for the European agri-food sector

The combined agricultural and food sector accounts today for 30 million jobs (13.4% of total employment) and for 3.5% of total Gross Value Added in the EU-28.

To meet the challenges of the coming years, the EU and Member States will require ambitious policies – policies that unlock the great potential of the European agri-food chain and maintain its place as a world leader; the challenges:

### Providing Food Security

Europe is a major global food importer and exporter and is home to some of the world's most fertile arable land. It must use these advantages to play its part in feeding the growing population in Europe and the world as a whole. By constantly innovating and ensuring the competitiveness of its farmers and its food industry, Europe will be able to meet this challenge and continue delivering sufficient amounts of high-quality food at affordable prices every day.

### Ensuring Food Safety

European consumers enjoy the highest standards of food safety, which are delivered all along the chain from farm to fork. Innovation helps maintain those standards in the most effective and efficient way.

### Helping Create Jobs and Growth

Europe can be globally competitive and ensure vibrant job creation and economic growth by enabling innovation, ensuring the deployment of best practices and eliminating unnecessary regulatory burdens in the agri-food sector.

### Safeguarding the Environment

Agriculture is closely linked with nature and the environment. Innovative technologies, products and practices can help make the most efficient and sustainable use of natural resources, and thereby improve farming's environmental footprint.

### Improving Today...and Tomorrow

The agri-food chain invests in the future and constantly looks for new ways to be competitive, productive and sustainable (economically, environmentally and socially); our goal is to make sure consumers in Europe and around the world continue to have access to healthy, high-quality, and affordable food choices.

# Policy Recommendations

As the EU prepares for major institutional changes in 2014, representatives of the agri-food chain encourage EU policymakers to take the following recommendations into account in the coming years:

## 1. Foster Innovation

Innovative technologies, products and processes have traditionally given a competitive advantage to the EU and are crucial for the agri-food chain. Agri-food policies must be geared to expanding the available toolbox of innovative approaches and tools to allow Europe to become more productive in a sustainable way. We call on EU leaders to:

- *Ensure Innovation is at the heart of EU agri-food policy making.*
- *Foster agricultural and food chain research to sustain innovation and knowledge transfer for a resource-efficient Europe.*
- *Reinforce and devote the necessary resources to European Innovation Partnerships on Sustainable and Productive Agriculture and Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life, as well as relevant ERA NETs.*
- *Ensure effective, fit for purpose, intellectual property rights and their enforcement.*

## 2. Sustainability: jobs, productivity and resource-efficiency

Social, environmental and economic sustainability is the best pathway to a more productive, resource-efficient and environmentally friendly agri-food sector. Systematic integration of these objectives in EU policies will ensure the competitiveness of the agri-food sector, the growth and the creation of jobs in Europe. We call on EU leaders to:

- *Include the social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainability in every EU policy measure.*
- *Promote the creation and protection of jobs in the agri-food sector, particularly youth employment, as a key priority for EU policies.*
- *Set up a specific unit on “Agricultural productivity, resource-efficiency and competitiveness” in DG Agriculture.*
- *Promote the establishment of a Food Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) in 2016/2017.*

## 3. Better and smarter policy-making: stimulating innovation in an enhanced common market

Innovation needs to be stimulated. The EU must support science, growth and innovation and in doing so, boost investment and consumer confidence. Europe should be leading as an innovative region, improving the functioning of the internal market and access to innovative products and processes. We call on EU leaders to:

- *Guarantee the functioning and further integration of the single market.*
- *Reduce administrative burden.*
- *Ensure convergence of EU policies and international agreements and foster regulatory cooperation with Third Countries.*
- *Facilitate market access for strategic technologies, products and materials.*
- *Ensure technology and product authorisation systems are science-based, proportional, workable, efficient, cost-effective, reliable and innovation-friendly.*
- *Develop better policy-making through an institutional common understanding of risk-benefit analysis in impact assessment relative to decision-making.*
- *Increase science and risk-benefit communication and education by competent public authorities to improve public understanding of the safety of assessed products.*
- *Support of the role of Chief Scientific Advisors at European and Member State level.*
- *Use the REFIT exercise to examine the functioning of the General Food law regulation (Reg. 178/2002) and other legislation related to agricultural innovation.*



*Pascale Rouhier*  
**Pascale Rouhier**  
 Secretary General

CELCAA is the EU umbrella association representing EU organisations covering the agricultural and agri-food trade.



*Ulrich Adams*  
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CEMA is the voice of the Agricultural Machinery Industry in Europe, providing farmers with cutting-edge technology.



*Teresa Babuscio*  
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COCERAL is the European association representing the collectors, distributors, exporters, importers and agribulk storers in cereals, rice, feedstuffs, oilseeds, olive oil, oils and fats and agrosupply.



*Pekka Pesonen*  
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 Secretary General

Copa-Cogeca is the voice of European farmers and agri-cooperatives, representing the interests of agriculture in the European Union.



*Nathalie Moll*  
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The European Association for Bio-industries (EuropaBio) represents the biotechnology industry in agriculture (seeds), pharmaceuticals and industrial biotech.



*Jean-Charles Bocquet*  
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The European Crop Protection Association (ECPA) represents the European industry providing with solutions and services for crop protection.



*Garlich von Essen*  
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The European Seed Association (ESA) is the voice of the European seed industry, representing those active in research, breeding, production and marketing of seeds.



*Alexander Döring*  
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The European Feed Manufacturers' Federation (FEFAC) is the voice of the European feed industry.



*Jacob Bagge-Hansen*  
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Fertilisers Europe represents the European industry manufacturing fertilisers.products.



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FoodDrinkEurope represents the European food and drink industry, namely national federations, European sector associations and individual companies.



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The International Federation of Animal Health - Europe (IFAH-Europe) represents manufacturers of veterinary medicines, vaccines and other animal health products.