

From: [REDACTED] (SANTÉ)
To: [REDACTED] (SANTÉ); [REDACTED] (SANTÉ); [REDACTED] (SANTÉ);
Cc: [REDACTED] (SANTÉ); [REDACTED] (SANTÉ); [REDACTED] (SANTÉ); [REDACTED] (SANTÉ); [REDACTED] (SANTÉ); [REDACTED] (SANTÉ); [REDACTED] (SANTÉ); [REDACTED] (SANTÉ);
Subject: BTO meeting with primary producers associations 11/02
Date: jeudi 11 février 2021 17:46:37

Dear all,

Please find below the BTO of today's meeting with some primary producers associations.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

Meeting between the Commission and the primary producers associations

11/02/2021

Meeting held at the request of the associations to discuss the procedure for the drafting of the Code of Conduct.

Participants:

- The associations: [REDACTED] (Animal Health Europe), [REDACTED] (UECBV), [REDACTED] (Copa-Cogeca).
- The Commission: [REDACTED] (G1 AGRI); [REDACTED] (GROW); [REDACTED] (D1 SANTÉ).

The Associations :

- Represent also FEFAC, EDA, CEJA, and CLITRAVI;
- Ask for a **fair representation of all parts** of the chain;
- Ask for an official mandate from COM on the groups' leaders to **avoid invalidation of the working groups' decisions** by an actor not present at them;
- Propose the working groups to be **structured under the 3 pillars** of sustainability;
- Make the remark that if sectorial issues are to be addressed, sectoral associations need to be represented;
- Ask the COM if **terms of references** with details on the practical aspects will be developed;
- Worry about the non-democratic process that could lead to **little buy-in by the ones not present in the working groups**;
- Remind the COM that **associations can't sign commitments on behalf of their members**;
- Wonder about the possible overlaps and contradictions between the code and the **future legislations**;
- Remind the existence of **CSR on which members already work**. The CoC should be linked to existing initiatives without duplication;
- Ask that the code doesn't anticipate measures that would require an impact assessment;
- Ask for concrete measures that fit the economic model;
- Remind that companies produce what the consumer wants: need to **educate and communicate about existing efforts**;
- Ask for the creation of a **webpage** kept up to date with all decisions and information along the process
- Remind that all sectors are important, and that the code **should not divide** the food sector by opposing parts of the chain. It must be a collective process.
- Appoint Copa-Cogeca as their contact point;

The COM:

- Explains that the 1st part will be general principles from associations, and the 2nd more concrete and preferably quantitative commitments from individual companies; each part will be discussed separately. The code should also **contain a framework for companies to sign later** and commit to all or parts of the commitments;
- Hasn't agreed yet with the middle part associations on the number of groups (maximum 5). Finalization of the process is ongoing;
- Wants a **transparent and inclusive** process, but also **efficient**: COM will have to select the working groups' participants, and make them less than 20 people. Participants not only from the middle part, and also a representative of the COM (to be decided);
- Asks the associations to choose 1 representative for the whole sector;
- Explains that the 1st meeting will present working procedures and the roadmap to create content;
- Won't make it a democratic exercise with veto, votes or majorities: the **COM will have the final say** and make a synthesis of the propositions based on the **alignment with the F2F and Green Deal**; reminds that it must be a **consensus-based** exercise where the COM will listen to all stakeholders; the CoC won't be a COM document;
- Reminds the incompressible timetable: the CoC must be ready for the UN summit;
- Encourages the associations to start working on how they can contribute in terms of substance;
- Reminds that if voluntary processes don't work, the **COM will use its discretionary power of legislative initiative**;
- Reminds that sustainability will become the norm, and that we can't wait until the sustainable food framework is adopted in a few years. The code will bring **practical improvements now**, and **go beyond existing** legislation. The code will be reviewed and **updated** in the future;
- Explains that the code will **cover aspects difficult to regulate** (ex: AW, increase vegetables consumption), and **improve cooperation** in the value chain;
- Explains that SANTE and GROW are the main chef de file, together with ENV. Discussions took place with other DG, and will continue. AGRI is willing to play a part in the process;
- Plans on answering all the uncertainties by the end of February, with group discussions and drafting from beginning of March;
- Agrees that retailers are part of the middle chain and have a role to play;
- Agrees that the code must avoid top-down pressure.

Next steps:

- COM: keep the associations updated on the progress made on the process, working groups, etc.