Mr Janusz Wojciechowski
Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels, Belgium

Re: Extension of the derogations to the application of GAEC 7 and GAEC 8 standards by Commission Implementing Regulation 2022/1317 for at least the year 2024

At the beginning of this year, a particularly difficult situation emerged in Lithuania.

In February, the milk crisis began, with prices suddenly falling by almost 20 percent to 37 ct/kg, which continues to this day.

Furthermore, due to late spring frosts and drought, farmers produced significantly less fodder, the amount of which dropped from 50 % up to 3-4 times. It is unrealistic to expect a better next yield of grass due to the ongoing drought. At the moment, the only way out is to feed cows with fodder prepared for the winter period. The amount of milk supplied to consumers has also decreased.

Farmers are faced with a dilemma – whether to reduce the number of animals (Lithuania already has the lowest animal density of 0,18 LU/ha) or to mow cereals preparing roughage for the winter.

On the other hand, about 20-30 % decrease in grain yield is predicted due to the drought. Absolutely unclear prospects regarding the survival and yield of spring crops.

The result of this is an unavoidable breach of contractual obligations with grain traders, suppliers of fertilizers (their prices were extremely high in the fall of 2022) and pesticides and the threat of bankruptcy. In the best case, the failure will have to be compensated the next year.

According to publications, natural disasters covered the whole territory of Europe this year. It is evident that the EU’s new climate adaptation strategy, "the need to act NOW", is being implemented too slowly, perhaps because of a disproportionate focus on actions on climate change mitigation and other areas.
Therefore, Lithuanian Association of Agricultural Companies is kindly asking Honourable Commissioner to consider the possibility of the extension of the derogations to the application of GAEC 7 and GAEC 8 standards by Commission Implementing Regulation 2022/1317 for at least the year 2024. Furthermore, given the overall impact of the Russian Federation’s unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine and disastrous climate conditions, in the context of Community’s will to ensure food security at the EU and global level, wider flexibility is needed not only for GAECs, but also for eco-schemes and agri-environmental climate commitments.