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Agroalimentaria del Ovino y el Caprino

Juh Terméktanács
SIOO Várpalota, Veszprémi út 7.

provacuno

To:

Mr. Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal
Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President for an Economy that works for people
Mr Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner for Agriculture
M. Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

February 15th 2021

Object: The European Commission must ensure consistency between its public agricultural, environmental, trade and promotion policies

Dear Executive Vice-Presidents,
Dear Commissioners,

Agriculture, the environment and trade are at the heart of the challenges Europe is facing in 2021.

Finalizing the negotiations for the future Common Agricultural Policy, implementing the actions arising from the "*Biodiversity*" and "*Farm to Fork*" strategies, the potential vote by the Council on the agreement between the European Union and Mercosur ...: all these decisions, which will be taken by the European institutions in the coming months, will have a direct impact on the daily lives of millions of professionals in the European livestock, beef and sheep breeding industries which we represent.

For this reason, we follow with great interest all political announcements made by, as well as the work of, the European Commission on these topics. We also follow all these matters with a lot of concerns and questions, as these announcements seem so inconsistent and contradictory to the work being conducted, depending on the texts or strategies which are put forward.

Within the framework of the negotiations on the future CAP, the Commission is committed - and rightly so - to ensuring the development of a sustainable livestock farming model that guarantees the production of quality meat, the upkeep of landscapes, the revitalization of rural areas, high animal welfare requirements and low use of antibiotics. Through the development of 66 million hectares of pastureland in Europe (i.e. about 1/3 of the agricultural area used), livestock farming provides widely recognized environmental services, for example in terms of preserving biodiversity and creating carbon sinks. This production is essential to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

On the other hand, a much more prejudicial approach to the sector is encouraged in the European Commission's strategies pursuing the objectives of the European Green Deal. In the "*Farm to Fork*" strategy, the livestock industry is presented, without any nuance, as being responsible for environmental and health damages for citizens. The move towards a drastic reduction - or even elimination - of all Community support for collective promotion campaigns for European meat and dairy products with the goal of encouraging citizens to drastically reduce their consumption of animal proteins, is a clear illustration of this. For years, these supports have contributed to inform consumers about the benefit and characteristics of the European meat production model. Excluding the whole livestock sector from EU promotion campaigns subsidies is a disproportionate and inadequate solution. European promotion funds should be kept available for livestock

farming models that respect sustainability (environmental, social and economic) by applying production regulations recognized by the European Commission.

Moreover, at the same time, the European Commission is unquestioningly pursuing its trade policy which has the mechanical consequence of increasing European imports of American meat!

After having publicly welcomed the conclusion of a modernised trade agreement with Mexico in the middle of the Covid-19-related lockdown, the Commission is now planning to present its proposals for the closing of the Mercosur agreement to the Member States some time in 2021. Amongst other things, this agreement will allow an additional 99,000 thousand tons of beef and veal meat to reach the internal market, mostly from Brazil, at favourable tariffs.

This is meat from South America, where environmental and health standards are far removed from European standards! This is meat from livestock farms which are responsible for deforestation, where cattle is doped with antibiotics and where the traceability system is unreliable, ...: at the end of 2020, a report drafted by experts appointed by the French government confirmed all the concerns already raised by an audit report conducted by the European Parliament in Brazil two years prior.

(<https://www.gouvernement.fr/partage/11746-rapport-de-la-commission-d-evaluation-du-projet-d-accord-ue-mercosur>).

On 25 January 2021, in the context of their discussions around the "Farm to Fork" strategy, both the MEPs and the Member States met in the framework of the informal Agriculture Council and stressed the need for consistency between these different policies: we need to ensure fair competition by requiring imported food products to comply with high production standards, notably in terms of environmental protection and sustainability, in line with those imposed on European producers.

These contradictions undermine the credibility of the European action and contribute to undermining the confidence of the professionals we represent in your institution. Therefore, we are appealing to you today and ask you to encourage a renewed consistency in the policies pursued by the European Commission.

The CAP, the European Green Deal, trade and promotion policies must, together, make it possible to respond to the major priority challenges of our time and contribute to reconciling EU food sovereignty and sustainability.

As representatives of the breeding, production and distribution professionals for beef and sheep meat in Europe, this is the course we have set ourselves so as to continue to progress and improve our practices. The European livestock industry must be recognised as a partner in all European actions towards achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal. This is the reason why we request your support as we work toward achieving a sustainable production.

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Padraig BRENNAN

*Bord Bia Director for Meat,
Food and Beverages*



Dr. András JÁVOR

*President of Sheep Products'
Board*

JUH TERMÉKTANÁCS



Dominique LANGLOIS

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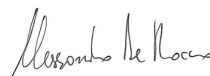
Eliseo ISLA ARGELICH

President of PROVACUNO



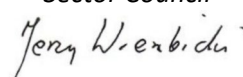
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