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Press Release

Trilogue negotiations on CE marked fertilizing products raises concerns in the farming community

With the last round of trilogue negotiations on CE marked fertilizing products taking place on November 20th, Copa and Cogeca express concerns regarding the limited progress made on critical points highlighted by farmers and agri-cooperatives at earlier stages of the legislative process, especially on cadmium limits.

The effects of the proposal made by the European Commission and the European Parliament to lower the limit of cadmium to below 60 mg/kg are not backed up by science nor by any impact studies. There is evidence to suggest that fertilizer prices could rise with the enforcement of such a proposal since sources of low cadmium phosphate rocks are rather limited worldwide.

Technology to remove excess cadmium is currently not available on a commercial scale, leaving farmers with very limited alternatives.

This is why Copa and Cogeca support the approach of the European Council, which does not lower the cadmium limit in mineral fertilizers below 60 mg and adds a standstill period of 16 years, leaving sufficient time for the fertilizer industry to adapt and propose competitive alternatives. The voluntary labeling for cadmium content is also a useful proposal to keep farmers informed and adapt to specific needs.

“Fertilizers represent a significant share of farmers’ yearly variable costs. Trilogue negotiators must ensure that farmers will get the choice and appropriate information when selecting their fertilizer in the future. 60 mg is a good compromise to keep a competitive market while maintaining a sustainable use of fertilizers”, said Pekka Pesonen, Copa Cogeca’s Secretary General.

For further information, please contact:

Dominique Dejonckheere

Senior Policy Advisor

Tel.: +32 2 287 27 730

Dominique.dejonckheere@copa-cogeca.eu

Jean-Baptiste Boucher

Communications Director

Mobile: + 32 474 840 836

Jean-baptiste.boucher@copa-cogeca.eu

CDP(18)8338:1
