



**CEPM**  
maiz'EUROP'

## Press release

Brussels, 28 June 2019

### **Giving maize back to the European citizens**

*First during its General Assembly and then during the European Congress in Brussels on Wednesday 26 June, the European Maize Production Confederation (CEPM) denounced the current loss of competitiveness of European maize while the European Union's demand is increasing and the EU has even become the world's top maize importer. At the dawn of a renewal of the European institutions, the CEPM wishes to work with the various bodies to promote the assets of the crop, and give European citizens their maize back.*

#### **The European Union needs its own maize**

By the end of the crop year, the EU will have imported more than 23 million tonnes of maize, 35% higher than during the previous crop year, which was already marked by record imports. It will therefore soon be the third crop year in a row that the EU has been the planet's top maize importer. At the same time, because of a lack of competitiveness, European maize production is eroding: 1.5 million hectares were lost in the EU between 2012 and 2018 and today 27% of the maize consumed in the EU is imported. The members of the CEPM intend to speak out against this situation which impacts the EU's economic health by degrading its trade balance, and goes against the interests of the European consumers who yearn for high-quality, sustainable and local food, whereas the maize imported mainly from Ukraine, Brazil and Canada does not meet EU production standards considering it is produced with neonicotinoids, atrazine or GMOs.

#### **Maize needs a new European ambition**

It is not too late to give European maize growers their productive force back, but first and foremost, maize should be excluded from the ongoing trade negotiations with Mercosur. The CAP must be more proactive than the current project, and the CEPM has made 4 proposals to this effect:

- Frame subsidiarity for direct payments by devoting at least 60% of the first pillar to the basic payment.
- Limit conditionality to current requirements and allow eligibility of any practice alternative to rotation that contributes effectively to soil quality.
- Capping all possible transfers from the first to the second pillar at 15%.
- Devoting 30% of the second pillar to risk management to ensure the competitiveness and resilience of farms.

## **European agriculture, at the heart of progress**

Clearly, European producers have all become aware of societal expectations and are fully committed to the progress expected by European citizens. This challenge is all the more important as the maize production is at the crossroads of the biggest European issues: food, energy, health, peace...

In this context, the CEPM engaged in the Agriculture and Progress platform alongside CIBE (European beet growers) and CEFS (European sugar producers) in order to raise the awareness of the European authorities on the strategic importance of having access to today's techniques, such as seed treatments, and tomorrow's techniques such as varietal or genetic innovation. This initiative is expected to expand and unite other partners. It is already present on social networks: twitter: @AgriProgress and LinkedIn: Agriculture & Progress.

***"In addition to the precautionary principle, the innovation principle must also be taken into account, because the future of European agriculture depends on it. Yesterday's and today's innovations are necessary to develop tomorrow's innovations," said Daniel Peyraube, President of the CEPM. "We cannot accept that our fellow citizens are deceived about the origin of their food. They yearn for a local and sustainable production, which is a source of economic wealth, and the European maize producers intend to rise to this challenge."***

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