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European Organisation of Agricultural, Rural and Forestry Contractors

Confédération Européenne des Entrepreneurs de Travaux Techniques Agricoles, Ruraux et Forestiers

Europäischer Zentralverband der land- und forstwirtschaftlichen Lohnunternehmer und ländlichen Dienstleistungsunternehmer

EIGHT CEETTAR PRIORITIES for THE 2024 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

CEETTAR represents the interest of agriculture, rural and forestry contractors in Europe. They provide a wide range of services to many types of customers, mainly farmers, as well as land and forestry owners, forest industry and public authorities. Farmers and contractors' economic relations are ruled by principles like those underpinning the sharing economy. The contractors' innovative practices create a bridge between biodiversity protection, carbon sinks and food/wood production. For the new European Parliament mandate, CEETTAR wants to:

1. Enhance the **role of contractors** as a major player in the agriculture and forestry value chain, as provider of precision agriculture and forestry solutions, regardless of the size of the farm or forest surface. For instance, while using more sustainable plant protection products and fertilisers, contractors can limit spray drift through specialised spraying technologies;
2. Ensure a **safe, secure, and efficient** handling of agriculture and forestry **machinery**. The security of agriculture equipment should be strengthened. Clear rules of data ownership and rights of use are needed, to ensure the development of artificial intelligence and connected devices, accompanied by a smooth portability and transferability of data;
3. Upgrading contractors' expertise offer by **training a skilled labour force**. These objectives address both young people outreach, as well as support to continuous vocational training and digital skills empowerment. We need to have an EU-wide T driving licence for agriculture and forestry, to make cross-border work more flexible;
4. Facilitate **decarbonisation of contracting activities**; through the development of alternative fuel to fossil fuel. This does not only include electrification of the fleet and the use of renewable and low carbon fuels, but also the smart use of machinery to increase the energy efficiency of contractors' activities;
5. Ensure the **sustainable management of all European forests**, which respects the differences between member states forest environment. The EU needs to secure forest resilience to natural hazards, foster afforestation, and tree planting, and treat young forest to select species resilient to climate change. There should be a greater use of all products and services associated with the forest, with no place for waste, and the use and recognition of primary wood biomass as renewable energy source;
6. CEETTAR proposes to introduce additional EU support to farmers who are making use of precision agriculture services provided by contractors. It will foster sustainable growth

opportunity for contractors, and will **promote innovation**. In the same line, CEETTAR supports the implementation of scientific researches to agriculture, such as the new genomic techniques applied to plant breeding;

7. The **customers' payment period** should be of maximum 30 days. Especially relatively large customers' companies use their power to lengthen their bill payment deadlines. This binds a great amount of capital in small service providing companies, which leads to cash-flow challenges, one of the major reasons for bankruptcy.
8. CEETTAR wants a sustainable and **responsible food and wood value chain**. It is important for Europe to have self-sufficient, sustainable, and responsible value chains. Our energy dependence of outer world's energy, critical raw materials should be less than today. Activities in all along value chains should be guaranteed to fulfil sustainability and responsibility criteria without jeopardizing profitability.

About CEETTAR:

The European Confederation of Agricultural, Rural and Forestry Contractors, established in 1961, represents about 150,000 companies and nearly 600,000 workers. It aims to represent the interests of land-based contractors in Europe. In 2014, the European Network of Forestry Entrepreneurs decided to merge with CEETTAR, resulting in a stronger and more representative single organisation representing land-based contractors at EU level. CEETTAR aims to be a proactive force to benefit the contractors and the rural economy at European level.