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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

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Europe's food security depends on investing in the whole agricultural ecosystem

President Ursula von der Leyen's State of the Union rightly places food and water security among Europe's strategic priorities. Her focus on water scarcity, agricultural risk management and the insurance gap reflects challenges that farmers and rural businesses are already facing across Europe.

For CEETAR, however, resilience and competitiveness in European agriculture also depend on recognising the wider agricultural ecosystem — including the agricultural, rural and forestry contractors who provide essential services, expertise and access to technology.

Innovation must reach the field.

Precision farming, digital technologies and modern machinery can help farmers use inputs more efficiently, improve productivity and reduce environmental impacts. Contractors are often the actors that make these technologies accessible in practice, particularly for smaller farms that cannot justify purchasing expensive specialised equipment themselves.

This is why European support should focus not only on **purchasing machinery, but on enabling farmers to access and use innovative technologies and services**. CEETAR has proposed mechanisms such as a smart technologies voucher to help make precision technologies available across farms of different sizes.

The future CAP and the next EU budget must therefore provide a **stable, adequately funded and strategically coherent framework** for agriculture and rural areas. Funding should support innovation, technology uptake, skills and investment across the entire agricultural value chain, rather than focusing exclusively on individual farm investments.

The same applies to climate resilience. Better water management, more efficient use of inputs, alternative fuels, smarter machinery and precision technologies can all contribute to a more resilient and competitive agricultural sector. EU policy should create the conditions for these solutions to be adopted in practice.

For CEETAR, the priorities are clear: **a strong and predictable CAP, investment in innovation and technology uptake, better access to services for farms of all sizes, and support for the contractors who help turn European agricultural policy into action on the ground.**

Europe's food security will depend not only on supporting farmers, but on strengthening the entire ecosystem that enables European agriculture to remain productive, competitive and resilient.