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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

## **CEETAR Position Paper on the FARM to FORK STRATEGY**

### **Contractors already contribute to a sustainable food system**

CEETAR share the European Commission concern on the need to build both a competitive and sustainable future for animal and human food production in Europe.

Contractors are using innovative and precision farming techniques on agricultural lands. These practices are reducing the quantity of necessary plant protection products. Hence, contractors are already directly contributing to reach the 50% reduction target in the use of pesticide by 2030, as planned in the Farm to Fork Strategy.

Due to the contractual provisions between Contractors and farmers, contractors need to be able to report on all the work done. This requirement makes environmentally friendly performances easier to monitor and control. Data management and data sharing create new business opportunities for contractors and broadens the scope of their activities. These changes bring additional guarantee both to the farmer and to the contractor that work is performed while respecting agreed quality standards in terms of environmental protection.

By using more advanced technologies, contractors are already equipped than to demonstrate their benefit in term of compliance with the Farm to Fork strategy.

### **What is CEETAR asking for?**

- CEETAR underline the importance of basing decisions on sound evidence from an economic, environmental and social point of view and demand a systematic impact assessment for each new legislative proposal in support to the Farm to Fork Strategy;
- The implementation of the Farm to Fork Strategy should be accompanied by transparent and appropriate indicators to assess how agricultural competitiveness, income and remuneration for new services are improving, together with the effects on environment and food security;
- The Farm to Fork Strategy supports the creation of new business models, which are green, profitable and compatible with the EU Green Deal (which also includes the Biodiversity Strategy and the new EU Forestry Strategy). In order to make EU agriculture both competitive and sustainable, CEETAR is pleading for a better

coherence between the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) and the entire Green Deal package.

- On the support to innovation side, CEETTAR would like to recall the need to promote effective Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS), which is enabling all actors to become sustainable by speeding up innovation and accelerating knowledge transfer. In addition, a farm sustainability database should set benchmark for farm performance and document the uptake of sustainable farming practices. To implement this process, CEETTAR pleads for the extension of access to fast broadband connections in rural areas.

### **Additional remark on the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Directive and use of plant protection products.**

CEETTAR welcomes the fact that the current revision process of the IPM 2009/128/14 Directive takes into consideration the repercussion of a more stringent application of IPM on economic operators involved in the distribution and use of pesticides, which includes contractors. In addition to this, the revision process of the various legislations on plant protection products (such as the Regulation EC 1107/2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market) must encompass the new spraying techniques, as already employed by contractors.

By complying with the changes in product authorisation, contractors can propose tailor-made solutions to farmers and forestry owners. These changes also generate additional business opportunities for contractors, as they are more equipped to adapt to changing circumstances and to use alternative products launched on the market containing newly approved active substances.

Against this background, contractors are joining the machinery industry, machinery dealers, pesticides companies and the entire agriculture value chain in their effort to launch alternative products and machinery on the market, based on increased research programmes.

### **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. Its objective is to:

- Represent the national federations and defend their professional interests in relation to the institutions of the EU. This way, CEETTAR is recognised as representative organisation for contractors towards the European Institutions,
- Represent the national federations and defend their professional interests towards other private organisations, which are active at European level and beyond. CEETTAR maintains

constructive relations with COPA-COGECA (farmers), CEMA (agricultural machinery industry), EFFAT (workers)...

- Help organisations in the new Member States to fulfil their national objectives as rapidly as possible and under the best conditions through the expertise transfer developed by the CAP 50 years ago.