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PRESS RELEASE

EU's preserved fruit and vegetable producers alarmed by proposed unilateral tariff-free market access for US products

PROFEL, the voice of the European preserved fruit and vegetables sector, **strongly opposes the European Commission's proposal¹ to unilaterally grant tariff-free access to a range of US preserved fruit and vegetable products**. This decision, finalized without any engagement with the industry, fragilizes our sector and undermines efforts towards the EU's food security and autonomy.

The proposal was finalized behind closed doors **without prior consultation**. European producers were sidelined and received no prior notification of a decision that would severely impact their resilience and add pressure to the market. The lack of dialogue is particularly disconcerting as the deal is asymmetrical and unbalanced for a number of products.

If the European Commission's proposal is approved, key US preserved products—including jams and fruit preserves, dried onions, other dried vegetables, preserved gherkins, frozen mushrooms, frozen vegetables (such as cauliflower, broccoli, and onion), frozen fruits, canned asparagus, canned peppers, and some canned fruits—**will enter the EU market entirely duty-free**. For dried onions for example, the tariff would go from 12.8 % to 0 %, while EU producers continue to face 29 % to export to the US.

The Commission proposal contradicts its commitment to support the EU fruit and vegetable sector, and to protect all sensitive products. The lack of reciprocity is likely to encourage more imports from the US for some products, thereby destabilising a fragile balance on the market for the products concerned.

PROFEL urges the European Council and Parliament to **amend this proposal** to ensure some reciprocity for the impacted products. We call upon the Commission to uphold its commitment to the EU fruit and vegetable industry and ensure that any trade agreement is developed in consultation with the sector.

¹ Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the adjustment of customs duties on the import of certain goods originating in the United States of America and opening of tariff quotas for imports of certain goods originating in the United States of America.

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PROFEL is the European Association of Fruit and Vegetable Processing Industries, representing over 400 companies in 12 European countries, producing canned vegetables, frozen vegetables, dehydrated vegetables, jams and fruit preserves, frozen fruit and canned fruit. The members of PROFEL employ more than 80.000 people. The combined turnover of our members amounts to an impressive figure – roughly €22 billion. Members annually produce approximately: Frozen vegetables: 3.300.000 Tons; Canned vegetables: 2.100.000 Tons; Canned Deciduous fruits and compotes: 1.000.000 Tons; Fruit preserves and jams: 485.000 Tons; Dried vegetables: 55.000 Tons (equivalent to approximately 600.000 tons of raw materials).