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Bi-annual newsletter from the European Association of Fruit & Vegetable Processors

15 JUNE 2013

Editorial:

Welcome to our first ever NEWSLETTER – aimed to keep our larger membership informed about the association's key activities, and providing an overview of EU issues of direct relevance to the sector. Our aim is to up-date you in this new format twice a year, and any suggestions are most welcome!

This first edition is also my last as “editor in chief”, and I take this opportunity to thank everyone for the excellent cooperation over the years: it was an inspiring, enriching and rewarding experience – both on a professional and interpersonal level. I hand over to Aline Rutsaert who is an experienced and highly motivated professional ready to breathe some fresh air into the association.

All the best,

Susanne Meyer

On 25th April 2013 PROFEL President Jean-Bernard Bonduelle opened the conference at the Pulman airport hotel in Brussels

8th PROFEL Conference of European Vegetable Processors

European vegetable processors met on April 25th 2013 in Brussels for their 8th conference entitled: **Innovation and Communication: How to bring our better products to the consumer.**

Vegetable freezers and canners discussed the importance of innovation, the need for the industry to adapt to the changing buying habits and expectations of today's consumers, and how best to communicate on the strengths of preserved vegetables.

155 participants from 9 European countries enjoyed stimulating presentations from six accomplished speakers, making the event a success.

[Link press release](#)

Nigel Thorgrimsson, PROFEL's Chairman of the Technical and Legislation Committee, chaired the Conference for the second time



Future of European Agriculture

The Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy is in its final phase: after 6 weeks of intensive negotiations between the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission, agreement on the reform is expected to be reached at the Luxemburg Council meeting on 24th/25th June.

The reform aims to assure a fairer distribution of Direct Payments to farmers, introduce « Greening » instruments, special support for young farmers, small farmers and less favoured areas. The proposals also encourages Producer Organisations, Interbranch Associations and short supply chains.



PROFEL contributed to the original public consultation on the CAP reform (DMS [CAP/10/007](#)), stressing industry's close links with farmers, and the importance of securing sufficient locally grown raw material from sustainable production in the future CAP.

The reform's most significant element for PROFEL's sugar users is the question of when to end the out-dated EU sugar quota regime. Exceptionally high prices, supply concerns and poor market management over recent years put sugar users' competitiveness at risk.

CIUS, the Committee of Industrial Users of sugar, coordinated intensive joint lobbying actions towards the European Parliament. PROFEL members supported the action, urging MEPs to end the quotas as soon as possible [Sug/13/004](#) and [Sug/13/013](#).

Last but not least, PROFEL joined the **Young Farmers'** initiative in the new CAP. President Jean-Bernard Bonduelle signed the Young Farmers' "pledge" of "Future Food for Farmers" Campaign, and recorded a video message for the website to express the importance of generational renewal in the European

farming community for our sector <http://www.futurefoodfarmers.eu/campaign>

Common Market Organisation (CMO) for Fruit and Vegetables

The so-called Single CMO is part of the present CAP reform package. More specifically, the fruit and vegetable sector is preparing for the next reform of the CMO for fruit and vegetables. PROFEL submitted a 12-point position paper to the public consultation ([CMO F&V/12/008](#)). Legislative proposals are expected after the summer 2013.

Court judgment on Value of Marketed Production for processed products

On the 30th of May the [European Court of Justice gave its judgment](#) on the question of what to include in the calculation to determine the Value of Marketed Production (VMP) for processed fruit and vegetables (Funding of so-called "[non-]genuine processing activities"). It seems the flat rate coefficients introduced for processed products are annulled. More clarity on

legal interpretations and the consequences of the ruling is expected in the forthcoming weeks.

Trade Issues

In February the EU and the US confirmed to launch negotiations for a comprehensive free trade agreement (FTA). PROFEL communicated its offensive and defensive interests ahead of the start of negotiations ([Trade/13/011](#)), scheduled for July.

In April PROFEL participated in the Market Access Working Group of DG Trade to present non tariff barriers encountered when exporting mushroom products to Singapore and India; a follow-up meeting with DG SANCO has been organized ([Trade/13/013](#)).

School Fruit Scheme

First review of the EU School Fruit Scheme: PROFEL took part in the public consultation by calling for better acknowledgement of the qualities of processed products in the scheme, and giving processed products a greater recognition ([SFS/13/005](#))

« In short »:

- PROFEL met with the European Commission in February to address the **trade concerns** of our canned peach sector regarding **South Africa, Swaziland and Russia** ([Trade/13/004](#))
- As negotiations with **MERCOSUR** continue and an exchange of market access offers could take place before the end of the year, PROFEL is preparing a note to remind negotiators of the sector's position ([Trade/13/012](#))
- The free trade agreement with **Peru** entered into force on 1st March 2013. The one with **Columbia** is expected to enter into force before the end of the year.
- **Unfair advertising:** PROFEL reacted in a letter against an advertising campaign in Sweden for a new organic vegetable range in tetra pack (GOGREEN), and its slogan "Yes we can forget the can" ([Comp/13/001](#))



Bisphenol A

End of 2012 France has adopted a law banning the use of BPA. Also a labeling decree has been notified, with conditions for labels which would caution against consumption by breastfeeding and pregnant women, and children up to the age of 3 years ([TLC.Cont/13/016](#)).

PROFEL – as part of a FoodDrinkEurope delegation that takes joint action with the Value Chain partners - attended several meetings with the European Commission, pointing out that France disregards existing EU rules regarding approved food contact materials, thereby undermining the authority of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). It creates obstacles to the free circulation of goods on the internal market, and also for international trade. The new labelling rules create uncertainty for companies, damage the product image by imposing disproportionate discriminatory warning labels, and put the sector's competitiveness at risk. Fruit and

vegetable processors are particularly affected because of the specificities of the products (such as long shelf life requirements). A letter and meeting request has been sent to the highest political level - Commissioner for Enterprise and Industry Tajani - in cooperation with the European Associations of the Tomato and Fish Processors.

Food Information to Consumers

At the end of 2011 the regulation 1169/2011 on providing food information to consumers has been published in the Official Journal. The work now continues with the preparation of the implementing measures and the reports on origin labeling, to be presented by the European Commission to the Parliament and Council.

At the same time Commission and Member States continue discussions on interpretation and application details. As a result of PROFEL actions,

either alone or in cooperation with other partners, several provisions initially scheduled which would have had a negative impact on the sector have been solved in the meantime. Examples include the date of freezing, glazing provisions, "defrosted", portion cups etc.

PROFEL continues to monitor the interpretation discussions and the preparations of the implementing measures. Especially the report on the mandatory indication of origin will again become a priority in the coming months.

Minor Uses

In collaboration with the Food Chain Roundtable partners (farmers COPA-COGECA, plant protection product producers ECPA, fresh fruit and vegetable sector FRESHFEL and traders associations), PROFEL continued its efforts to put the issue of adequate EU coordination for minor uses back on the political agenda. The aim is to secure the necessary funding for a new platform. [TLC.Pes/13/0013](#) & [TLC.Pes/13/014](#)

AGENDA



- **Bisphenol A:** Meeting with Cabinet of Commissioner for Enterprise
- **Technical and Legislation Committee Meeting:** 30 Oct 2013 late morning
- **Fruit Product Groups:** autumn meetings Oct/Nov – date to be confirmed asap
- **Canned & Frozen Vegetable Group meeting:** 30 Oct 2013 early afternoon
- **Dried Vegetables Product Group Meeting:** week of 18 November 2013 in Frankfurt at the Food Ingredient Europe FIE trade fair. Exact date to be confirmed

