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Press Release

Copa-Cogeca and UECBV takeaways from the Ministerial Conference on African Swine Fever eradication

For the first time, Agriculture and Environment Ministers gathered yesterday in Brussels at a joint event to reflect upon the control and eradication of African Swine Fever (ASF), at the initiative of the Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis Andriukaitis. Representing respectively the farming sector and the livestock and meat trades union, Copa-Cogeca and the UECBV had the opportunity to present [their pan-European actions to raise awareness of biosecurity best practices](#), from farm to slaughterhouse. They also shared their views on how to tackle ASF efficiently.

Both organisations welcomed the statement that was released at the Conference as it lays the groundwork for the future EU strategy to resolve the ASF issue, which has both an economic and a social impact. In particular, the statement emphasises the importance of cross-sectoral and cross-border cooperation as well as long-term management of the wild boar population across all the Member States.

Reflecting on the discussions, Pekka Pesonen, Copa-Cogeca Secretary General, said *“I was glad to see today the commitment of so many Member States in the fight against ASF. Several national representatives also advocated a drastic reduction of wild boar populations, including in non-affected areas, in order to limit risks of contamination. The importance given to increased cross-border cooperation in the discussions and the clear statements made on the integrity of the single market, notably the recognition of the EU regionalisation principle by third countries, are heading in the right direction for Copa-Cogeca.”*

Jos Goebbels, Vice-President of the UECBV, highlighted that *“Today’s meeting was an opportunity to remind everyone that African Swine Fever is a pan-European issue that requires a strong and collective response. The European pig meat sector is vibrant across Europe, bringing growth and jobs to rural area thanks, inter alia, to its export capacity (which has a value of 7.7 billion euros). It would be a mistake to consider ASF to be a concern specific to some regions and requiring solely the attention of those Member States affected by ASF. Experience has shown us that the human factor is key to preventing the disease from spreading. This is why it is essential to ensure that the entire chain works on biosecurity/preventive measures. At the same time, the general public and key stakeholder groups need to be well informed on best practices.”*

-ENDS-

Translations (in French, Italian, Spanish, German and Polish) will soon be available www.copa-cogeca.eu

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