



# Relevance of the EU plant health regime to growers and foresters

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# Copa and Cogeca

## Two organisations...

- representing **15 million people** working full-time or part-time on EU farms: **COPA**
- and around **40,000 cooperatives**: **COGECA**
- among the biggest and most active interest groups in Brussels

# COPA and COGECA

- Together, Copa and Cogeca represent 76 Members and 29 Partner Organisations from 27 MSs
- 38 members are from new Member States
- Six working languages: EN, FR, DE, IT, ES, PL

# Preamble

## **Copa-Cogeca reminders :**

- throughout the history of plant health, growers have constantly contributed to plant health in order :
  - to meet consumer expectations
  - to preserve agriculture, horticulture, forestry, public and private green, and natural ecosystems against harmful organisms
- Farmers play an essential role in monitoring plant health on a daily basis
- Plants are regularly inspected to take appropriate action by detecting the first signs of disease

# Topics to consider

## **4 items under consideration:**

1. Simplification and adjustments to community legislation
2. Risk reduction , prevention and inspection
3. Financial resources
4. Commission communication policy

# **(1) Simplification and adjustments of the community legislation**

## **KISS principles must be kept in mind.**

- EU legislation is getting more complicated and difficult to understand even for experts
- this makes rapid and adequate reactions difficult especially in emergency situations
- harmonisation and better interpretation at international level are necessary; the EU should strive for its standards to be applied internationally
- common playing field at EU level and towards third countries to avoid imperfect competition and trade distortion situation



## **(2) Simplification and adjustments of the community legislation**

### **KISS principles must be kept in mind**

- vertical and horizontal harmonisation between EU-MS
- health status of farms: the certification of farms obeying certain rules should be considered, provided this results in a lower regulatory burden for farmers overall (e.g. lower level of inspections)
- better definition between status of harmful / quarantine organisms
- management and efficient prioritisation of list of HOs is needed
- future legislation should allow an efficient preventative approach and rapid reactive management

# (1) Risk reduction, Prevention and Inspection

## **Risk reduction should be achieved at 4 levels:**

- **International level**

- Quality and efficacy of border inspection
- Training of inspectors is crucial
- Sharing information with agri-food chain stakeholders
- Enforcement of existing rules

- **EU level**

- Secure borders of enlarged EU
- While inspections at EU level are very rigorous for EU exports to third countries, the same cannot be said of inspections outside the EU for the imports from third countries.

## **(2) Risk reduction, Prevention and Inspection**

### **Risk reduction to be achieved at 4 levels:**

- **National level**

- Surveillance based on risk assessment
- Together with an improved identification system
- Implementation and continuous update of contingency plans

- **Farm level**

- Good hygiene rules and codes of good practice must include both plant and public health aspects
- No HACCP at farm level

# Financial resources

- Public resources needed - Farmers cannot be left alone to assume the responsibility for and the costs of measures to control the spread of HOs and their consequences
- Resources should be focused on identified real threats. Controls that no longer prove necessary should be abolished
- Spread of harmful organisms have a strong impact at farm level
- Imports of plants or parts of plants not under farmers control

# Communication policy

## **A three way strategy:**

### **1. Communication targetting key stakeholders**

- planned and scheduled cooperation between EC and stakeholders

### **2. Communication targetting general public - EU consumer**

- public is not fully aware of the plant health situation
- private gardens can influence spread of harmful organisms

### **3. Communication targetting third countries**

- communication with third countries to improve knowledge of plant health legislation in EU
- compliance must be prerequisite for imports

# CONCLUSIONS

**Copa and Cogeca welcome the fact that the EU is evaluating the community plant health regime and :**

- Wishes to actively contribute to this debate
- Hopes that the future CPHR keeps in mind the crucial role that agriculture plays in it

***Agriculture depends on healthy plants in a healthy environment !!!***



Thank you

[www.copa-cogeca.eu](http://www.copa-cogeca.eu)