



Press release

European farmers stress the essential role of biodiesel for agriculture and transport decarbonisation post-2020

Brussels, 13 October – The European Oilseed Alliance, the European Biodiesel Board and the Vegetable Oil and Protein meal Industry held yesterday a dinner-debate in the European Parliament during which panellists from all backgrounds discussed the role of sustainable biodiesel in the low-carbon economy post-2020. The event allowed EU stakeholders and policy-makers to share Californian experiences through the participation of Stephen Kaffka from the University of California.

Opening the discussions, MEP Françoise Grossetête, Vice-President of the EPP Group in the European Parliament, reminded the challenges that the EU biodiesel producers and farmers are facing following the European Commission's announcement of a gradual phase-out of crop-based biofuels. *"The long term stability of the regulatory and policy framework is essential to secure the investments that were made in the European biodiesel sector – whose development was encouraged by the European legislator – and for promoting the development of advanced technologies"*, she said.

European farmers also expressed their serious concerns over the proposed phasing out of first generation biofuels: *"In times of dramatic and existential challenges for EU agriculture, taking away the outlet of biodiesel for the oilseed production would represent a new blow for European farmers, especially in less productive regions. Furthermore, the biodiesel outlet helps reducing oilseed price volatility, while safeguarding biodiversity"*, said Arnaud Rousseau, Chair of the Oilseed and Protein-crops Working Party of COPA-COGECA.

The European biodiesel production was developed mainly on mandatory set-aside lands. This has allowed to significantly reduce the EU protein deficit and to guarantee an income for farmers, while producing ILUC-free biodiesel. As such, Yves Madre, cofounder of the think tank FarmEurope, underlined that the large majority of the biodiesel produced from European feedstocks has not had any ILUC emissions. Moreover, *"European feedstock sourced biodiesel induces the production of 7 million tonnes of additional protein feed materials annually, thus reducing feed imports and attributing an ILUC credit to biodiesel"*, he pointed out.

Panellists and participants also exchanged and shared experiences from the two sides of the Atlantic. Professor Steve Kaffka explained the policy environment in California and highlighted that the work done by the California Air Resources Board on ILUC has been incremental in developing incentive policies for biodiesel: *"The study carried out by the CARB found that rapeseed biodiesel has a low ILUC impact, classifying it among the best biofuels. It has hence been the basis for an alternative fuel policy that encourages innovation and relies on consistent and publicly transparent methods. As a result, biodiesel will play an increasingly larger role in helping California achieve its transportation GHG reduction goals in the next several years."*

Ms Marie Donnelly, Director for Renewables, Research and Innovation, and Energy Efficiency at DG Energy, highlighted that the biofuels debate is still very emotional and that *"ILUC is not an exact science"*. The European Commission is assessing the different options for the post-2020 energy package, foreseen for the 7th of December.

A week after the Paris Agreement was ratified by the EU, and as the bloc aims at being the world leader in renewable energy, **our associations remind that it is crucial to continue to promote sustainable energy sources such as European sustainable biodiesel in the transport sector**, in order to reduce our carbon footprint and efficiently fight climate change.



The **European Biodiesel Board (EBB)** is a non-profit organisation established in January 1997. Today, EBB gathers nearly 80 members across 21 Member-States, which represents 75% of the European output. EBB aims to promote the use of biodiesel in the European Union and is committed to fulfil International standards for sustainability in GHG emissions and sustainable feedstock. EBB is constantly working towards the development of improved and greener technologies.

FEDIOL is the European association representing **the Vegetable Oil and Proteinmeal Industry**. The sector covers more than 150 facilities belonging to 35 companies in 17 EU countries and employs directly 20,000 people. Its members process oilseeds, refine and bottle vegetable oils.

Founded in 2002, the **European Oilseed Alliance** brings together the oilseed producing organizations from the main European countries (Germany, France, UK, Poland, Czech Republic, Finland and Belgium) and represents 90% of European oilseed production.

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