



# PRESS RELEASE

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## Barroso unveils new Commission team and portfolios

**Changes of responsibilities for the seed and biotech sector indicate more aligned and strategic policy development**

**John Dalli will head strengthened Consumer Protection Directorate while Connie Hedegaard clings prestigious Climate action portfolio**

The new European Commission is taking shape. Following the nomination of candidates by Member States, President Barroso now assigned portfolios to individually designated Commissioners. This assignment is likely to bring some important changes for the agri-food sector and specifically the seed industry.

Most importantly, the responsibility for plant related legislation will be bundled in DG SANCO with the Unit for Biotechnology, Pesticides and Health which was part of DG Environment being transferred to DG SANCO's Directorate with responsibility for Plant Health, Biotechnology and Pesticides.

"This seems a very logic and proper decision that is welcomed by our sector" commented Garlich v. Essen, Secretary General of ESA European Seed Association. "The split of responsibilities for a number of policies and dossiers between SANCO and ENVI often led to delays and inconsistencies in policy development and administration in the past."

The seed industry hopes that the concentration of responsibilities in one Directorate General, under one Commissioner and possibly within a single Directorate could bring more consistency and help to develop and implement a strategic policy for seed and green biotech.

Next to the new Commissioner for Health and Consumers, Mr John Dalli, from Malta, the new Commissioners for Agriculture (Dacian Ciolos, Romania), Environment (Janez Potocnik, Slovenia) and Climate Action (Connie Hedegaard, Denmark) will be important actors for many of the files related to the seed and agri-food industry. "It will certainly be interesting to see in what way the policy priority of climate change will now be translated into concrete administrative and legislative work by the designated Commissioner" von Essen comments on the appointment of Connie Hedegaard as Commissioner for Climate Action.

Subject to the approval of the new designated Commissioners by the European Parliament following individual hearings before the related EP Committees in January 2010, the new Commission will officially take office by the end of that month.

We will watch hearings and political statements closely and provide all Members with a comprehensive analysis of Commissioners and Cabinets in due course.

ESA is the voice of the European seed industry, representing those active in research, breeding, production and marketing of seeds of agricultural and ornamental plant species. It represents 37 national seed associations (and with that more than 1000 seed businesses in the EU, most of them SMEs) and 55 direct company members.

ESA's mission is to work for fair and proportionate regulation of the European seed industry, freedom of choice for customers in supplying seeds as a result of innovative, diverse technologies and production methods and for effective protection of intellectual property rights relating to plants and seed.

**Contact:**

**ESA**

**European Seed Association**

Tel. 0032-2-7432860

[secretariat@euroseeds.org](mailto:secretariat@euroseeds.org)

[www.euroseeds.org](http://www.euroseeds.org)