



ORGANISATION OF EUROPEAN INDUSTRIES  
TRANSFORMING FRUIT AND VEGETABLES  
ORGANISATION EUROPÉENNE DES INDUSTRIES  
TRANSFORMATRICES DE FRUITS ET LÉGUMES

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## Adequate solutions to protect speciality crop and minor uses

At a Conference today, a call was made for more investment to ensure the availability of crop protection solutions for speciality crops and minor uses in the European Union. These speciality crops include most vegetables, fruits and flowers with an EU agricultural production value of greater than €50 billion per year.

Representatives from the European Commission, Member States and eight food chain organisations discussed together for the first time the challenges and future of crop protection solutions for speciality crops and minor uses under the new Regulation on the authorisation of plant protection products<sup>1</sup>.

The Conference reached a general consensus on four key points::

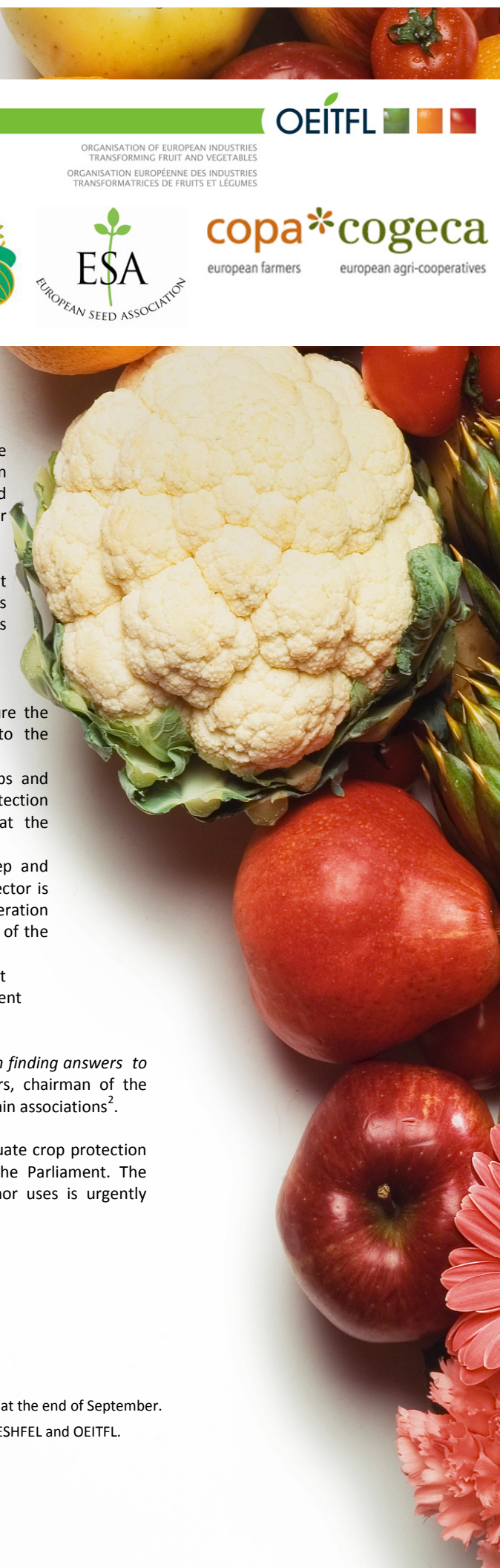
- **Protection of specialty crops and uses:** Minor use authorizations ensure the protection of high value speciality crops and uses that contribute to the availability of high-quality healthy and affordable food for all consumers.
- **Greater coordination:** There is a need to have specific EU workgroups and coordination units to look at minor use issues and find common crop protection solutions for specialty crops. The Commission's commitment given at the Conference to re-instate these groups was supported by all participants.
- **A step towards improved cooperation:** The workshop was a first step and broader cooperation between all the players in the public and private sector is required, including wider cooperation with third countries. Such cooperation needs to have a holistic approach that will also consider the implications of the implementation of the Sustainable Use Directive
- **Minor use fund:** The IR-4 programme from the United States is an excellent model that provides solutions and has shown a high return on the investment made. A similar approach could be beneficial in Europe.

*"We welcome the openness of the debate and believe that it is the first step in finding answers to the many problems and difficulties faced by our sectors."* said Luc Peeters, chairman of the phytosanitary group within COPA-COGECA and representing the eight food chain associations<sup>2</sup>.

*"Greater coordination and additional funding will be crucial to provide adequate crop protection solutions. This should be a priority issue for the new Commission and the Parliament. The initiation of the report on the establishment of a European fund for minor uses is urgently needed."*

<sup>1</sup> The Regulation is due to be published in the next few days following Council agreement at the end of September.

<sup>2</sup> The eight organisations are: AREFLH, CELCAA, COCERAL, COPA-COGECA, ECPA, ESA, FRESHFEL and OEITFL.



Note:

A large number of crops grown in Europe that are of major importance for the food industry and consumers are relatively minor, both in scale of production and also in their use of plant protection products, when compared to the total agricultural production. While the magnitude of pest problems faced in these crops is similar to major crops, many newer and more efficient plant protection solutions are often unavailable to farmers and the food chain operators, mostly for economic reasons. The withdrawal of numerous plant protection products in recent years has exacerbated the problem creating several gaps in plant protection solutions. The availability of an adequate crop protection toolbox for the future is a key element to support farmers to continue producing minor crops as well as ensuring a safe and efficient completion of the food supply chain.

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