

PRESS RELEASE

The Primary Food Processors show impacts of possible extended origin labelling rules

Brussels, 15 November 2012 - The **Primary Food Processors** organised their 2012 Forum on the new requirements on country of origin labelling and the consequences for the food chain in Europe. Products like vegetable oil, sugar and flour can be found on retailers' shelves but are equally found as primary ingredients in a multitude of foodstuffs. Hence, the Primary Food Processors will be heavily impacted by the possible extension of origin labelling requirements. These additional rules are likely to make the food supply chain more complex and more costly.

Speaking at the forum moderated by Mr. Bruce Ross (Ross Gordon Consultants), Mrs. Alexandra Nikolakopoulou from DG SANCO extensively explained the articles of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 related to origin labelling and the European Commission's intentions regarding the implementation of these articles.

Mr. Alberto Alemanno, Jean Monnet Associate Professor in Law at HEC Paris, addressed the procedural aspects around the possible new rules, the impact that these rules will have on international trade, and expressed strong doubts on the overall benefits of such provisions for consumers.

Mrs. Camille Perrin from BEUC, the European Consumer Organisation, presented the results of a survey indicating that consumers care about the origin of products, although acknowledging that in terms of priority origin came in 5th or 6th place. Mrs. Perrin noted that the survey did not inquire on consumers' willingness to pay more for foods on which the origin would have to be provided.

Mr. Johann Marihart, PFP president, highlighted the fact that origin labelling should not be confused with traceability requirements that guaranty safe products on the EU market. Stressing that the voluntary origin labelling for food companies or retailers "*results in a de facto mandatory origin labelling for primary food processors*", he identified four direct impacts for PFP companies (impacts on sourcing, storage, processing and labelling), and pointed to the additional consequences for the environment, the current trade flows, as well as ultimately for consumers. The PFP President called for an economically viable solution on this issue.

The forum gathered approximately 120 participants from the EU Commission, the Member States as well as the many stakeholders representing the whole food supply chain.

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