

Primary Food Processors make a plea for voluntary use PEF

Brussels, 30 November 2017 - Ahead of next year's EU policy debate on the use of product environmental footprint methodologies, PFP invited stakeholders for a Forum on 30 November 2017 to share their vision and experience. Over the course of 2018, the European Commission plans to start discussing policy options for the use of Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) and the Product Category Rules that have been developed and tested over the last four years.

Zooming in on the key aspects of life cycle assessments in the agro-food chain, Primary Food Processors consider that the availability of PEF and product category related PEF rules could deliver on a needed EU harmonization of methodologies.

While it was made clear that any environmental claim made by market operators in the EU should be compliant with these product environmental footprint category rules, PFP representatives also insisted that such claims should remain voluntary.

Due to the importance of sustainable development for their activities, PFP sector organizations and their individual companies have invested significantly in environmental life cycle assessment (LCA) and/or product environmental footprints (PEF) of their products. They consider that environmental LCA and PEF should be used for understanding the hot-spots of products' life cycles and for reducing the environmental impact of their activity. PEF and LCA should not however be used for product comparison, due to the many pending methodological and data issues.

Primary Food Processing (PFP) companies are processing annually 220 million tonnes of agricultural raw materials, such as oilseeds and crude vegetable oils, sugar beets, starch potatoes, maize, wheat, rye, oat and cocoa beans. PFP companies deliver high quality ingredients at large scale and optimized cost. PFP processing is highly efficient, but in most cases the specific origin of the agricultural raw materials is not uniform, making it impossible to relate environmental data to those raw materials.

The **Primary Food Processors of the EU (PFP)** consists of six trade associations: **European Starch Industry Association** (Starch Europe), **European Committee of Sugar Manufacturers (CEFS)**, **European Cocoa Association (ECA)**, **European Flour Milling Association** (European Flour Millers), **European Vegetable Protein Federation (EUVEPRO)**, **European Vegetable Oil and Proteinmeal Industry (FEDIOL)**

PFP represents the European primary food processing industries. It provides the link between agricultural raw materials and final products (secondary processors in the food, feed and non-food sectors). PFP members process approximately **220 million tons of raw materials** (cereals, sugar beet, rapeseeds, soybeans, sunflower seeds, cocoa beans, crude vegetable oil, starch potatoes...) **employing over 120 000 people** in the European Union. **Their economic contribution was recently assessed by the LEI Wageningen UR Report: [“Primary Food Processing, cornerstone of plant-based food production and the bio-economy in Europe”](#)**