

Press release

2022 Primary Food Processors Forum | 7 November, Brussels

Brussels, 8 November 2022

Primary Food Processors (PFP) held its 2022 Forum on 7 November 2022, under the title ‘Rising to the challenges of climate change and energy supplies’.

Primary food processors play a vital role in securing the EU’s food resilience. But today the sector is under extraordinary pressure. Energy costs have risen dramatically, at first due to the post-COVID rebound in demand, but more dramatically since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. This pressure comes as primary food processing sectors are looking to intensify investments in decarbonisation.

Besides the current energy crisis, other long-term challenges persist: How to increase the sustainability of agriculture with a diminished toolbox for farmers? And how to maintain yields in an increasingly unpredictable climate?

The ongoing energy crisis has led to short-term solutions at national level to ensure facilities can continue to operate and guarantee food security in the EU. But more action is needed. In the short-term: financial support for primary food processors to tackle the impact of soaring energy costs. And EU-level action to ensure that energy supplies are available and affordable following the upcoming winter.

In the long-term, primary food processors need a supportive regulatory framework. This means allowing primary food processors to produce energy to power factory processes from biomass residues – crucial if the sector is to decarbonise and reduce the EU’s dependence on imported fossil fuels. It also means helping farmers to produce agricultural raw materials competitively.

Moderated by Florence Ranson and with speakers including Huub Scheres, PFP President, Diana-Paula Gherasim, Research Fellow at Center for Energy & Climate (IFRI), Ricard Ramon, Deputy Head Unit Policy Perspectives, DG AGRI-EU Commission, Pekka Pesonen, Secretary General, COPA-COGECA, Alexandra Tudoroiu, Head of Policy, COGEN Europe, and Marie-Laure Empinet, Director External Affairs Roquette/PFP, a lively discussion took place covering these and many other issues relevant to their diverse member sub-sectors.

The PFP President, Mr. Huub Scheres, highlighted the valuable debate and conclusions drawn from this year’s Forum: *“This event is very timely. If not properly managed, the current energy crisis could significantly delay primary food processors on their path to decarbonisation. The right policy environment, and more public support, is urgently needed to ensure that operators have enough capital available to invest in green production processes.”*

The PFP Board and Members would like to express their most sincere thanks to all our guests and distinguished speakers who contributed to the great success of the 2022 PFP Forum. We look forward to meeting them again in the next edition.

The **Primary Food Processors of the EU (PFP)** is composed by:

European Committee of Sugar Manufacturers (CEFS)

European Cocoa Association (ECA)

European Flour Milling Association (European Flour Millers)

European Vegetable Protein Association (EUVEPRO)

European Vegetable Oil and Proteinmeal Industry (FEDIOL)

European Starch Industry Association (Starch Europe)

PFP members process approximately 220 Million tons of raw materials (cereals, sugar beet, rapeseeds, soybeans, sunflower seeds, crude vegetable oil, cocoa products, starch potatoes...) employing over 120 000 people in the European Union.