

July 13th 2016

To Copa Cogeca  
Secretary-general Mr Pekka Pesonen

cc: EC  
Commissioners Phil Hogan  
Commissioner Cecilia Malmström

Dear Pekka Pesonen,

We write you this open letter at the occasion of the 14th round of negotiations on TTIP and the forthcoming Agricultural Council on 18th July where the European Commission will present a state of play in agricultural trade.

We would like to draw your attention to the report “*Selling off the Farm*” (1) which was published [by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), AbL, PowerShift and Compassion in World Farming (CIWF)] and launched at the European Parliament on 12 July 2016.

As legislators, the facts presented in this report deeply disturb us about the effects of a TTIP agreement between the EU and the U.S. The report focusses on the regulatory cooperation aspect of the ongoing negotiations and predicts a grim future for European farmers, their livelihoods, working conditions and employment. **We must also note—that many of these issues should also be a cause of concern to all of us regarding CETA—where beef, pork and dairy are also implicated.** Our European standards on animal welfare, food quality and safety, public health and sustainable farming practices were achieved as a result of hard fought battles—TTIP’s regulatory agenda is likely to endanger all that we have won.

Amongst the report’s main findings we especially note:

- TTIP will accelerate corporate concentration and expand industrial meat production or “factory farming” by increasing the power of meat-producing transnational corporations. Liberalizing tariffs will make EU meat products even less competitive, increasing pressure in the EU to adopt even cheaper, industrialised practices that largely shift environmental and health costs onto the public. Furthermore, it will disincentivise new regulations that seek to discipline the industry’s worse practices, particularly if these rules raise the cost of production.
- At the same time, regulatory “harmonisation” measures embedded in TTIP will directly or indirectly pressure governments on both sides of the Atlantic to reduce regulatory costs and “non-tariff barriers” to trade. TTIP will weaken and lower existing standards, particularly when it comes to animal welfare, genetically modified food, food safety and public health.

- U.S. negotiators are unlikely to accept anything less than what was negotiated in the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). That agreement makes zero tolerance on GMOs (including for animal feed) much more difficult, thereby undermining the EU's longstanding adherence to the precautionary principle.

- Many new agricultural and food technologies are being developed or already utilized with limited or no regulation. TTIP will make rulemaking in the public interest much more difficult in the future for technologies such as gene editing and cloning.

- The chilling effect of TTIP's (de)regulatory cooperation provisions will make it increasingly challenging in the future to effectively regulate impacts of the meat industry on climate change and other as yet unforeseen issues.

- Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) provisions in TTIP are likely to thwart efforts to effectively regulate the global meat industry's growing power and will exponentially expand the number of corporations empowered to use these provisions. With ISDS, transnational meat corporations such as JBS and Smithfield--present and expanding on both sides--could be newly empowered to challenge regulations that hurt their bottom line, even if they are nominally headquartered in other countries such as Brazil and China.

We would like to point out that from a EU perspective any future trade deal should benefit foremost, employment in rural European areas including small and medium-sized businesses and small scale farming, especially sustainable, ecological and resilient farming practices with decent standards for animal welfare. Anything less will lead to a race to the bottom and this would be totally irresponsible and violate public trust.

As shown by the most recent Eurobarometer (3), such policies are strongly supported by a majority of EU citizens. More than nine out of ten respondents in the EU (94%) believe that agriculture and rural areas are important for their future. More than half of EU citizens state that they would support even higher contributions to the CAP, provided that it truly benefit sustainable forms of agriculture. These policies are also supported by a majority of the European Parliament—as you will note from the EP resolution on TTIP, agreed in July 2015.

A recent American Chamber of Commerce report (4) on Europe and TTIP states: “An ambitious agreement would include the harmonization of food safety standards, e-commerce protocols, data privacy issues. It would also encompass the standardization of a myriad of service related activities in such sectors as aviation, retail trade, architect, engineering, maritime, procurement rules and regulations, and telecommunications. This all equates to more jobs and income for workers on both sides of the pond.”

The report, “*Selling of the Farm*” shows exactly the opposite. Since Copa sees itself as representing millions of European farmers, we urge you to consider the potential problems TTIP might cause. We are aware that farmers' representations' at the national level have voiced clear opposition to TTIP, for example, the Dutch pork producers and the French beef producers. The National Council of Farmers' Chambers (KRIR), an umbrella body of all regional institutions of farmers' self-government in

Poland (farmers' chambers), pointed out in a letter to the Polish Minister of Agriculture that "TTIP is a threat to European agriculture."

As a key player in the EU agricultural policy debate, we believe that you cannot afford to ignore these concerns and would therefore highly appreciate receiving Copa Cogeca's views on these issues. We look forward to communicating further with you in the coming months.

Kind regards,

Bart Staes, MEP  
Sirpa Pietikainen, MEP  
Anja Hazekamp, MEP  
Tiziana Beghin, MEP  
Ignazio Corrao, MEP  
Rosa D'Amato, MEP  
Eleonora Evi, MEP  
Marco Zullo, MEP

**References:**

- 1) "Selling of the Farm": <http://www.iatp.org/selling-off-the-farm>
- 2) European Parliament (July 2015) European Parliament resolution of 8 July 2015 containing the European Parliament's recommendations to the European Commission on the negotiations for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) (2014/2228(INI):  
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2015-0252+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>
- 3) Eurobarometer report "Europeans, agriculture and the CAP":  
<http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/PublicOpinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/2087>
- 4) AMCHAM report: <http://www.amchameu.eu/publications/case-investing-europe-2016-why-us-firms-should-stay-course>