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French and German oilseed farmers urge for maintenance of mandatory first generation biofuels objectives in the renewable energy directive after 2020

At the invitation of the Union for the promotion of oil and protein plants (UFOP), representatives of the French federation of the producers of oilseeds and proteins crops (FOP) under the leadership of its Vice chairman, Arnaud Rousseau and representatives of the UFOP under the leadership of chairman Wolfgang Vogel spoke on January 25th, 2017 in Berlin about the crop situation and sectorial issues. FOP and UFOP are the major branch organizations for oilseeds and protein crops in France and Germany.

FOP and UFOP asked for the maintenance of mandatory first generation biofuels objectives in the renewable energy directive for 2020 – 2030. This is the condition to give prospects to farmers and biofuel producers and to approach the ambitious objectives of use of renewable energy announced for 2030. For the two organizations the development of renewable energies does not have to compromise the existing renewable biofuels produced from rapeseed also producing protein meals but to take into account their benefits and to promote in addition advanced biofuels.

UFOP and FOP focused their meeting in Berlin on the last energy proposals from the European Commission. In its “winter package”, the Commission proposed to limit first generation biofuels from 7% in 2020 to 3,8% in 2030 of the fuels. In addition the Commission proposed to introduce mandatory objectives for advanced biofuels in the same time she suppressed objectives in transport. The outlets of the oilseeds producers are directly threatened by these proposals. With no objectives in transport, the European Commission proposals could lead to the end of the first generation sector and will lead to a fall in seeds’ prices and to a retreat of the rapeseed acreage at the European level.

FOP and UFOP dispute the European Commission analysis and draw attention to the consequences for European agriculture. Indeed, the limitation of the first generation will result in a degradation of the already existing European deficit in plant proteins and will have an impact as regards to the diversity of rotations. For FOP and UFOP, the European ambition displayed as regards to renewable energy must result in the mandatory objective of 7% for the first generation biofuels coproducing protein and feed, a development in the long term of the advanced renewable energies over the first generation and the fixing of targets for transport. The advanced fuels will indeed not be available at a significant level before several years, their development is at best in progress and their profitability is not proven to date. Also UFOP and FOP stress that the first generation, which is not concurring food production in Europe, respect high level of sustainability, already exist and is necessary to the realization of ambitious objectives as regards to renewable energies, in particular in transport. FOP and UFOP called European Commission with an examination of the results reached in 2025 as regards to the development of the advanced biofuels.

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