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Press Release

African swine fever: UECBV underlines the importance of continued cooperation to solve trade barriers to EU pork

At the EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council meeting on 15th July 2019, the state of play on African swine fever (ASF) was discussed. The situation in Europe remains stable, while in Asia the disease continues to spread at an alarming rate. Nevertheless, EU trade partners continue to raise barriers to safe EU pork. UECBV defends the idea that the continued cooperation between Commission services, Member States and stakeholders will be fundamental to overcome those barriers.

The situation regarding ASF in the EU remains stable and the virus remains contained in the infected zones. However, as the summer period reaches the EU, a peak of cases is expected. Thus, UECBV supports the plea of the Commission to remain vigilant and continue the exemplary work done by the EU regarding ASF control.

The success of the EU control system, including EU regionalisation, can be seen on the eradication of ASF in the Czech Republic, or on the containment of the disease in the wild boar population in Belgium and Hungary, or even in Estonia since 2018. Furthermore, no cases of ASF were linked to trade in pork, be it intra-EU or for exports.

However, in spite of the achievements of the EU control system, most trade partners continue to apply trade barriers to safe EU pork, despite proactive and transparent communication and cooperation strategies from the EU, its Member States and industry.

In UECBV view, the strong cooperation between DG AGRI, DG SANTE, DG TRADE, EEAS and the EU Member States must continue in order to remove these barriers. It is also crucial to continue the partnership between Commission services and industry, like in the recent and successful EU Seminar on Standards for Agri-food Products held in Mexico.

The EU meat industry is also engaged in resolving these trade issues. Last February, it co-organised with its Chinese counterpart (China Meat Association) the “Chinese-European Seminar on cooperation towards ASF control and safeguarding mutual trade” where a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed regarding future cooperation and acceptance of OIE standards to safeguard international trade.

A joint effort from all EU authorities and stakeholders based on the accomplishments of the European system in containing ASF and delivering safe pork, and on the OIE standards for safe international trade is needed to convince our trade partners of the fact that EU pork is safe.

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For further information:

Karsten Maier, Secretary General, Tel: + 32 2 230 46 03

E-mail: info@uecbv.eu

UECBV is the European Livestock and Meat Trades Union. UECBV is an EU association representing in total, some 20,000 firms of all sizes and over 230,000 jobs are represented through its national member federations. The vast majority of these enterprises are small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

UECBV's core objective is to achieve an optimum business climate for the livestock and meat industry across the European Union and to strengthen the competitiveness of the industry as a whole. To achieve this goal the UECBV **represents and defends the meat** sector vis-à-vis the European Institutions, promotes **EU trade and international trade**, deepens the **internal market and** fights against **competition distortions**.
