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EMB congratulates Dacian Çiolos on his new post as EU Commissioner for Agriculture

EU's new role in shaping the milk market an issue of socio-political importance

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Today – Tuesday, 9 February 2010 – saw the European Parliament in Strasbourg confirm Dacian Çiolos's appointment as EU Commissioner for Agriculture. The European Milk Board (EMB) congratulates him on his appointment and is convinced that with his expertise in agriculture he will very soon be ready to enter into in-depth dialogue with the European milk producers.

On the occasion of the EU High Level Expert Group on Milk meeting last week (Tuesday, 2/02/2010) the European Milk Board made it clear that the role of the EU in shaping the milk market will still be very important in the future. That is because only regulation at European level can maintain the milk market balance in the short term and the long run. National solutions or the proposals put forward by some dairies and governments for regulating milk supply through direct contracts between farmer and dairy are misguided. They further weaken the producers' bargaining position and result in ever greater fluctuations in volumes and prices.

Yet the state does not necessarily have to perform an executive role. It suffices if the EU prescribes basic conditions that strengthen the milk producers' bargaining position and gives them tools for taking control of the market. It is in society's best interest to have high-quality food production. That is why the EU's involvement in shaping the milk market calls for a monitoring body to ensure that the interests of all concerned are safeguarded.

The EMB proposes setting up a European Monitoring Agency with representatives from all those involved in the milk market, i.e. politicians and consumers as well as milk producers, the milk processing industry and the retail trade. "A solution must be found that satisfies society's requirements for multifunctional milk production in dynamic rural areas," says Romuald Schaber, President of the EMB. "A key prerequisite for this is protection from the outside both for the European market and for markets in other parts of the world that prevents dairy produce being dumped."

Contact: Romuald Schaber (DE): 0049/1603524703 Sieta van Keimpema (EN / NL): 0031/612168000 Willem Smeenk (FR): 0033/686436156 You can find the EMB's Position Paper on the EU High Level Expert Group on Milk meeting on 2 February 2010 on our website www.europeanmilkboard.org

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