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## Press Release

### **International Day of Cooperatives: sustainable production at the heart of agri-cooperatives**

Together with EU Farm Commissioner Phil Hogan and MEPs, the European Agri-Cooperative Organisation Cogeca celebrate in Brussels the United Nations International Day of Cooperatives and underline the key role they play in ensuring sustainable production.

**Cogeca President** Thomas Magnusson said “Agri-cooperatives play a major role in enabling farmers – their members – to pool their resources, market their produce and add value to it whilst anticipating consumers’ needs. We place people at the heart of our actions and serve the needs of our farmer members, enabling them to get a better return for their produce at the same time as creating vital job opportunities in the rural areas”.

The slogan of the United Nations 2018 International Day of Cooperatives on **July 7** is “Sustainable society through cooperation” which gives an opportunity to show how agricultural cooperatives run successful businesses, pool farmers assets for common goals, whilst respecting the environment and natural resources.

Welcoming the initiative, **EU Agriculture Commissioner** Phil Hogan said “Cooperatives are the lifeblood of the EU agri-food sector and they provide our farmers with greater strength and security through working together. By implementing the cooperative principles and placing sustainability at the core of their activities, agri-cooperatives enable their farmer-members to work together, in ways that increase the value of their production and optimise the use of resources and reduce energy demand”.

“Today's celebrations remind us that cooperatives deserve to be supported in their development and protected in their commercial relations with other operators. It is crucial to allow cooperatives to develop further, so that their members can have access to tools needed for sustainable, resilient and innovative agriculture,” **Chairman of European Parliament’s Agriculture Committee** MEP Czeslaw Siekierski stressed.

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