



PRESS RELEASE

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The Agri-Food Chain Coalition (AFCC) comprises eleven EU-level associations from agricultural input industries such as suppliers of machinery (CEMA), seeds (ESA), fertilizers (Fertilizers Europe), crop protection (ECPA), animal health (IFAH-Europe), feed (FEFAC) and biotechnology-based products (EuropaBio), the agricultural trade (COCERAL and CELCAA), EU farmers (COPA-COGECA) and European food and drink manufacturing sector (FDE). Together, these industries account for more than 30 million jobs and some 3.5% of the EU's gross value added.

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EP report on “Technological solutions for sustainable agriculture in the EU” gets strong backing from Agri-Food Chain Coalition

The report on “Technical solutions for sustainable agriculture” drafted by MEP Anthea McIntyre, and already endorsed by the European Parliament’s Agriculture Committee (COMAGRI), received strong backing by the Agri-Food Chain Coalition (AFCC) at a dinner debate in Brussels on 31 May, just days before the final vote in Strasbourg next week.

The AFCC welcomed the initiative of MEP Anthea McIntyre (ECR, UK) and called for consistent EU policies to unlock the potential of innovation in Europe’s agri-food sectors to maintain its position as a world leader. *“This is a very important report at a time of a deep farming crisis with low commodity prices. Strengthening innovation is key to improve the situation of farmers, agricultural input industries, traders and food companies alike,”* Garlich v. Essen, Chair of the AFCC, underlined in his opening remarks.

In her speech, MEP Anthea McIntyre highlighted that competitiveness, economic growth and jobs are the potential benefits of an innovation-friendly and supportive political and regulatory environment in Europe. *“Innovation and sustainability are mutually supportive rather than competing policy objectives,”* McIntyre pointed out during the further discussion which specifically focused on what hinders concrete implementation of pro-active policies and corresponding rules that may help industries and farmers to overcome obstacles.

Some key issues and challenges addressed by the report include precision farming, big data and informatics, soil, water and nutrient management, as well as precision breeding.

In his conclusions, Garlich v. Essen confirmed the AFCC’s strong backing of the report: *“This report finally establishes new technologies as crucial tools that can help to assure competitiveness and drive sustainability. What we need to do is bringing it to life with corresponding strategic policy initiatives and to embed the innovation principle firmly in the EU’s future regulatory approach.”*

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