

AREFLH Statement on the CMO revision

AREFLH takes note of the text adopted on 16 June by the European Parliament in plenary session following the agreement reached with the Council in March on the revision of the Common Market Organisation (CMO) Regulation. While some limited improvements have been retained, the final outcome raises serious concerns and, in several respects, departs from the stated objective of strengthening the position of producers within the agri-food supply chain.

While the more restrictive definition of unrecognised producer organisations is welcome, allowing such entities to benefit from competition-law exemptions for up to five years without ultimately obtaining recognition risks weakening incentives for formal recognition and undermining the integrity of recognised producer organisations, which remain at the core of the CMO.

Furthermore, the proposed wording of Article 153 risks circumventing the single-membership principle. The requirement to join a producer organisation (PO) for “any given product”, defined as products that are “sufficiently distinct, in particular on the basis of their characteristics or intended final uses”, lacks legal certainty and introduces excessive interpretative flexibility. This ambiguity could facilitate multiple PO memberships for closely related products, including different varieties of the same product. Given the practical difficulties associated with enforcing this provision, we urge the co-legislators to address this issue in the context of the forthcoming CMO revision under the new CAP framework.

AREFLH also regrets that Parliament’s improvements aimed at better reflecting the contractual realities of perishable and seasonal products were not retained, as this risks increasing administrative burdens and further fragmenting the internal market.

Taken together, these elements not only fail to strengthen the position of producers but may also weaken a framework that has supported the development and competitiveness of the fruit and vegetable sector for decades.

AREFLH therefore expresses its strong concern regarding the outcome of this reform and calls for renewed attention to the specific needs of the fruit and vegetable sector in the forthcoming discussions on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

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The mission of AREFLH, the Assembly of European Horticultural Regions, is to:

- Represent its members: regions, APOs, POs, and expert members from 14 European countries.
- Defend the economic and social interests of the fruit and vegetable sectors in Europe.
- Encourage exchanges of experience, partnerships, and joint projects between regions and professional organisations.
- Be a driving force behind proposals on the main issues affecting the future of the sector’s production in Europe.

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