

PRESS RELEASE

Wine CMO Reform: the CEEV welcomes the compromise reached, which leads the way to reforms allowing to improve the competitiveness of the whole EU wine sector.

Brussels, 19th December 2007 – Following the end of the Wine CMO reform negotiations during the Council of Ministers of Agriculture held in Brussels from 17th to 19th December, the *Comité Européen des Entreprises Vins* (CEEV) welcomes the compromise reached, a compromise which undeniably leads the way to implementing the reforms essential to improving the competitiveness of the whole EU wine sector.

"While strengthening our best traditions, this reform marks a point of no return for a greater orientation towards the market and will help us mobilising our sector in order to better meet the consumers' expectations in an increasingly open and competitive context", said Lamberto Vallarino Gancia, President of the CEEV.

The CEEV warmly acknowledged the political courage and personal energy of Commissioner Fischer Boel in promoting most of the elements essential to a reform aiming at improving the competitiveness of the European sector towards international competition – and this in spite of the conservatism of some stakeholders from wine producing Member States, which have taken the risk to delay the reforms necessary to the European wine sector, increasing thereby the opportunities of third country competitors to better meet the new expectations of the consumers.

The CEEV is particularly satisfied with the Council's agreement because of

- Confirmation of a precise deadline for the removal of the ban on new plantings, without prejudice of the sectoral organisations still being in charge of the PDOs' management of production potential
- Greater flexibility in the field of segmentation and labelling, as well as in the authorisation procedures of OP approved by the OIV, so as to strengthen the reactivity of the European sector in all segments

However, the CEEV deplores the fact that the Reform do not provide for a true ambitious external trade policy for wines.

Finally we consider it is essential for the EC to keep on acting as a clear and strong filter as to the implementation of the national programmes, in order to avoid any distortion of competition.

"It is now up to us, operators of the European wine sector, to take our responsibilities", said the President of the CEEV. *"We must get actively involved in the implementation of the first step of the reform and the changes essential to help us adapting our decisions to the new expectations of the consumers."*



The CEEV – Comité Européen des Entreprises Vins – is the representative body of the EU industry and trade in wines: still wines, aromatised wines, sparkling wines, liqueur wines and other vine products. Its membership gathers 24 national associations. In 2006, EU wine exports totalled € 5.5 billion, contributing a net surplus of € 3 billion towards the EU's trade balance.

Throughout the negotiations, the CEEV has contributed positively and suggested improvements to the proposals, in the sole purpose of strengthening the competitiveness of the EU wine sector.

For more information:

**José Ramon Fernandez
Secretary General**

CEEV – Comité Européen des Entreprises Vins

Av. des Arts 43, B-1040 Bruxelles

ceev@ceev.be

www.ceev.be

Tel: (0032 2) 230 99 70

Fax: (0032 2) 513 02 18

GSM: 0032 (0) 495 28 18 42