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New alliance formed to protect EU agriculture



ADEA will lobby new MEPs to defend and promote European farmers and producers

A group of European agricultural associations, including several fruit and vegetable organisations, have formed a new alliance to defend their interests in response to growing imports from non-EU countries.

The announcement followed Thursday's meeting in Brussels of European fruit and vegetable association FruitVegetablesEUROPE (Eucofel), and a number of national associations who have become increasingly concerned about the European Union's trade policy.

The Alliance for the Defence of European Agriculture (ADEA) will lobby new MEPs to defend and promote European farmers and producers, and ensure a level playing field in trade agreements with third countries.

"The Alliance wants greater determination from the EU institutions to insist that all imports of agri-food

products meet exactly the same standards imposed on European producers," said Eucofel president Juan Marin.

In addition to these food-safety requirements, ADEA said there needed to be more focus on the environmental and social sustainability criteria when negotiating trade agreements with third countries.

In a statement issued on Friday, ADEA said European agriculture should not be undermined by trade agreements with third countries.

As well as seeking that imported products respect the same production standards as those imposed on European producers, both in conventional and organic farming, ADEA said European consumers should have access to transparent information regarding the differences between EU production models and those of third countries; and

that more could be done to help them understand and support the social and cultural aspects of the EU farming.

The founding members of the alliance are: Eucofel ; Spanish exporter federation Fepex; Spain's Citrus Management Committee ; the Association of Producer Organisations of Fruit and Vegetables of Andalusia ; UGPBAN, ASPROCAN and GESBA, the French, Spanish and Portuguese banana associations; European Banana Association APEB; Spanish garlic association AMPCA; Polish national association of fruit and vegetable producer groups, KZGPOiW; French tomato and cucumber group AOPn, Greece's INCOFRUIT; the Irish Cattle and Sheep Association; The European Sugar Manufacturer's Association and the European Sugar Manufacturer's Association.