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Press release

The EU biodiesel industry has been urging the European Commission for many months to impose provisional countervailing import duties on unfair biodiesel imports from Argentina before the legal deadline of October 31st. Provisional duties today and, ultimately, definitive duties will be vital for the future of the EU biodiesel industry and production chain, including EU agriculture. In this context an official hearing was requested with DG Trade and took place this afternoon (October 18th, 2018) and a large number of representatives of the EU biodiesel industry met today with Commission officials.

The EU biodiesel industry, EU farmers' associations and the EU oilseeds transformation industry are extremely worried about the inexplicable reluctance of EU authorities to defend the legitimate interests of the EU biodiesel sector against massive amounts of unfair imports from Argentina. Trade flows from this country reached an all-time high in July and August this year (despite a registration of all imports had been imposed since June), attaining 241.000 tonnes in July, which represents 25% of the overall EU market in that month. For the last 12 months, subsidized Argentine biodiesel imports into the EU, represented a total of 1.622.000 tonnes, being sold often at prices below the actual raw material costs and hence, affecting heavily EU producer's profitability.

Following its investigation that started in January this year, the Commission clearly found that Argentinean exporters are strongly subsidised and are threatening to cause a huge damage to the whole EU biodiesel sector that already materialized, also implying strong risks for industry, jobs and farmers revenues. All the conditions are met for the Commission to urgently establish a 30% provisional countervailing duty on Argentinean imports. Though, with no clear explanation – also during today's hearing – the Commission seems to be unwilling still to impose such provisional duties.

At the end of the hearing Ms. Kristell Guizouarn, EBB President, stated: *"We made clear again with the Commission that there is no reason not to impose provisional duties and that duties are absolutely needed to defend our EU industry from unfair imports coming from Argentina. As a matter of principle if all conditions are met, as in this case, the Commission should impose such measures."* This request is coming not only from the EU industry, but also from EU farmers and from a large number of EU Members States that are urging the Commission to act (six of them even addressed a direct letter to Commissioner Malmstrom to urge her to impose provisional duties)."

Also, if no provisional duties were to be imposed, it would be impossible for the EU to levy retroactive duties on the extraordinary surge of unfair imports from Argentina which occurred in the last months. EBB urges the Commission to act as soon as possible in this case considering, without any naivety, the gravity of the Argentinean practices over the last months.

The **European Biodiesel Board (EBB)** is a non-profit organisation established in 1997. Today, EBB gathers close to 70 members across 21 Member-States, which represents 75% of the European output. Biodiesel is the main European solution to reduce emissions from transport and dependence on imported oil. EBB aims to promote the use of biodiesel in the European Union and is committed to fulfil International standards for sustainability in GHG emissions and sustainable feedstock. EBB is constantly working towards the development of improved and greener technologies.

FEDIOL is the European Association representing the vegetable oils and protein meal industry. The sector covers more than 180 facilities belonging to 35 companies in 17 countries and employs directly 20,000 people. Its members process oilseeds, refine and bottle vegetable oils.

The **European Oilseed Alliance (EOA)** brings together the oilseed organizations of the major European producing countries (Germany France, United Kingdom, Poland, Czech Republic, Finland, Belgium, Sweden) EOA members represents 90 % of EU oilseed production - EOA works in association with the European organizations representing the oilseed supply chain, producers, processors, and seed breeders: Copa-Cogeca, FEDIOL, EBB, ESA.

Copa and Cogeca are the united voice of farmers and agri-cooperatives in the EU. Together, they ensure that EU agriculture is sustainable, innovative and competitive, guaranteeing food security to half a billion people throughout Europe. Copa represents over 23 million farmers and their families whilst Cogeca represents the interests of 22,000 agricultural cooperatives. They have 66 member organisations from the EU member states. Together, they are one of the biggest and most active lobbying organisations in Brussels.