



Bologna, 10th June 2013

Dear Minister,

In the context of the on-going trilogue at the EU level on the Common Agricultural Policy reform, I am writing in my capacity as President of the Association of European Regions for Products of Origin (AREPO) to bring to your attention some insights concerning the place of quality products in the regulations that compose the CAP.

We welcome the work carried out by the European Parliament concerning quality products. It is in fact thanks to its work that quality products, the importance of which had not been fully acknowledged by the European Commission, can hope to count on key instruments for their valorisation. We would like to stress the relevance of, in particular, art. 17 of the Regulation on Rural Development, as amended, and the possibility for producers groups to manage production volumes of PDO and PGI products in order to avoid market crisis and preserve quality, foreseen within the Single CMO Regulation.

We regret to observe that the Council hasn't given its support to such amendment proposals, and we would like to invite you not to forget the issue of quality products amidst the bigger debates that are shaping the future CAP. The aim of such proposals is indeed to acknowledge the socio-economic value of geographical indications as well as their strong connection to the territory where they are produced and where they are a key source of employment and revenues. Geographical Indications are equally an element that helps rooting population in rural areas that would otherwise be abandoned and it is also important to keep in mind their contribution to the preservation of biodiversity, local cultural identities and the variety of European landscapes.

We hope that you will help to shape the debate in order to take into account the proposals of our Association, which represents Regions and producers from 8 European countries, as well as more than 45% of European geographical indications, including some of the most well-known. We believe that these proposals are not only important to us, but also to many other territories in Europe that wish to obtain a rural development based on quality and on the uniqueness of their products.

I remain at your disposal for any further information.

Yours faithfully,

Tiberio Rabboni
President of AREPO