



Bologna, 10th June 2013

Dear Commissioner Ciolos,

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 (A.R.E.P.O.) to draw your attention to 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, which introduced some key instruments for their valorisation both in the Regulation on support for rural development by the EAFRD and in the Single CMO Regulation.

Concerning the former, I would notably like to remind you the meaning for our sector of article 17, as amended by the European Parliament. We sincerely hope that the contents of this measure, which will have a huge impact on our territories, on their level of employment in rural areas and on the preservation of our traditions and biodiversity, will be preserved.

Another element that would be particularly important for us concerns the possibility to maintain the flexibility granted to Member States with regards to the identification of specific needs for the creation of thematic sub-programmes (article 8). This would allow interested Member States to foster the valorisation of quality products as an effective tool for rural development.

With regards to the Single CMO Regulation, I would like to stress the meaning for our sector of article 109b, as amended by the European Parliament. The possibility for Producers' groups to regulate supply is expected to stabilise the market and to keep a greater percentage of the value generated in the territories that produced it.

We wish 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.

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