

PRESS INFORMATION



European Dairy Association presents initiatives from “Global Dairy Agenda for Action on Climate Change” on EU Policy Seminar

On Thursday 29 October, the European Dairy Association (EDA) organised in Brussels an EU Policy Seminar on the “Global Dairy Agenda for Action on Climate Change”. They presented and discussed the initiatives taken by the European dairy industry to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to the production and consumption of milk and milk products, and asked the EU authorities to work towards a Climate Change agreement in Copenhagen that will allow the dairy sector to contribute to this following their current approach.

Brussels, 2 November 2009

The EU Policy Seminar “A Global Dairy Agenda for Action-Climate Change” was organized as a follow-up action to the Berlin event last month, where the worldwide dairy industry signed the Global Declaration on Climate Change. The EDA first presented the plans and actions – current and future - that the European dairy industry is taking in the particular context of Climate Change, and invited in a second part of the afternoon speakers from the EU-presidency and the European Commission to contribute with their view on the discussion.

Global Dairy Agenda for Action

As most would agree, dairy products contribute to good health and well-being of people all over the world. These products have been an essential part of a balanced, healthy diet for centuries and the production and processing of it also plays an important role in social and economic structures, especially in rural areas.

As a responsible stakeholder, the European dairy industry acknowledges that there is an impact out of dairy on the environment, amongst others through the emission of greenhouse gasses. These emissions are in part related to the use of mineral fuels with production, processing and distribution of dairy products, but the methane emissions of the enteric fermentation in the rumen of the cows and the methane and nitrogen-oxide emissions related to the storage and use of manure contribute in particular. Research has demonstrated that these are relevant emissions, but has also shown that needed emissions reductions are manageable, and that there are various options to contribute significantly to these reductions.

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Over the last 25 years, there have already been several efforts and initiatives in the European dairy industry, and research has proven that they are indeed on the right track. Yet because of the need for everyone to work in the most efficient manner, dairy industry organisations from around the globe have decided to join forces, and have jointly developed the Global Dairy Agenda for Action on Climate Change. This agenda was presented on 24 September 2009 during the World Dairy Summit in Berlin, together with the so-called "Green Paper" which is a living document that bundles some 260 projects from 40 countries for a sustainable dairy sector and thus intends to disseminate the best practices in the global dairy sector. The projects from the Green Paper illustrate that the dairy industry is not only talking about greenhouse gas emissions reduction, but also working actively on it.

The Dairy Industry on the Road to Copenhagen

In their responses, representatives for the Swedish EU Presidency and of the DG Environment, DG Enterprise and Industry and DG Agriculture and Rural Development from the European Commission all stressed the importance of concrete actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They applauded the European dairy industry for their global approach and long-term vision in this matter. Also positively received was the fact that the dairy industry is looking for solutions in the whole production chain, from feed for the cows to the finished product on the breakfast table.

"Actions such as our initiatives should be developed in close collaboration with all stakeholders, and also with policy makers," says Mr Joop Kleibeuker, Secretary-General of the EDA. *"I am therefore very happy to have been able to present and discuss what we are doing today. We think that we have shown, with the various projects, both on measurement and calculation, as well as on mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, that it is possible for the dairy sector to give a significant contribution to the needed greenhouse gas emissions reduction. We will continue to strive for this, and ask the authorities to work towards a Climate Change agreement in Copenhagen that will allow us to follow along the lines we presented today. Under such an agreement, the dairy sector will be able also in the future, to contribute to the balanced healthy diet for European citizens and to the further development of stable social and economic structures in rural areas,"* concludes Kleibeuker.

The objectives and scope of the global dairy industry's initiatives are to be consulted on www.dairy-sustainability-initiative.org

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN DAIRY ASSOCIATION

The European Dairy Association represents the interests of dairy processors in the European Union. The membership of the EDA consists of the national trade associations for dairy processors in each EU Member State.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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