



***Press Release: Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture sets direction for innovative approaches towards agri-food trade policies***

***Brussels, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024: Agri-food trade, operating in a complex and interconnected environment, has been a substantial part of the discussion of the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture discussed by a multifaceted stakeholder group during the last seven months. With the objective to ensure a good understanding and to work towards sustainable and innovative perspectives for agri-food trade, CELCAA has been contributing to ensure systemic and pragmatic debate and to build bridges in areas where views have been diverging. The report generated from these discussions highlights the integral role of agri-food trade in promoting global sustainability.***

While the holistic nature and contribution of agri-food trade are reflected in the entire report, a dedicated chapter, "Promoting the Global Transition," is framing the challenging context of increasing but necessary sustainability requirements for EU agricultural production and trade and the impact of it in a global context. *"With that regard, we have been achieving a result that is opening doors for new innovative and more coherent approaches for the exports and imports of agri-food products and strengthening the road towards a common multilateral standard-setting environment,"* says Nelli Hajdu, Secretary General of CELCAA.

With agri-food trade being an essential pillar of sustainable agri-food systems, the report emphasises the importance of further coherence and alignment between trade and sustainability policies. This can be achieved through increased transparency and comparability of standards as well as adopting a systemic approach by consolidating export and import policies under a single directorate rather than multiple entities within the EU policymaking environment. The report also calls for empowering the European Commission to lead the development of a global trade policy framework for sustainable agri-food systems, including the reform of existing global trade policies and strengthening the role of international standard-setting bodies. Additionally, it underscores the need to carefully consider the implementation and feasibility of unilateral measures for operators both within and outside Europe. The European Commission is also urged to review its approach to future trade negotiations, considering the strategic importance of agriculture. Jochem Versloot, CELCAA's new president, states: *"Now that the report is published, we will systematically analyse it and focus on ensuring that the recommendations are implemented to support a transition towards a sustainable, fair, and open agri-food trade environment."*

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**About CELCAA:**

CELCAA is the European Liaison Committee for Agricultural and Agri-Food Trade, representing the interests of European traders in various agricultural and agri-food products. Through its activities, CELCAA aims to promote a favourable trading environment, ensuring the smooth operation and development of the agri-food trade sector in Europe.