

*Brussels, 9 December 2025*

## **PRESS RELEASE : Uphold trade rules, keep trade moving**

**CELCAA is deeply concerned by proposals to impose reciprocal production standards on products from third countries, which would effectively end the import of certain products into the European Union.**

### **Current situation**

The baseline which exists, and which of course must always be maintained, is that any product placed on the EU market must be safe for consumption. This is currently the case for any imports entering the EU.

### **Our concern**

The application of EU production standards to imports from third countries to the extent that products containing residues of substances not used in the EU would be blocked or would face difficulties to enter the EU market, goes far beyond ensuring safety and flies in the face of international trade rules. CELCAA calls for an outcome and science-based approach, rather than prescriptively dictating to trading partners. **We believe that this should be addressed as a matter of urgency.** At best, this will alienate our trading partners and lead to disputes at WTO level, at worst this could result in significant retaliatory actions by trading partners. Moreover, it is worth remembering that such a policy will result in a restricted choice for consumers as a lot of products cannot be grown in the EU. In instances where the EU is a smaller buyer on a global scale, there is the risk that products will disappear entirely from the EU market.

### **No open discussion**

While the concept of reciprocal standards is fielded within the Vision for agriculture and food communication from February 2025, it is deeply regrettable that there has not been an open and fair debate on the concept since then. Even the European Board on Agriculture and Food, intended as a forum in which a 'new culture of dialogue amongst the different players in the agri-food chain' has not had the opportunity to discuss this.



## Looking to the future

CELCAA calls for legislators to make a sensible and future-focused choice and to reject a general principle leading to the application of reciprocal standards, in particular for pesticides. Going forward, the EU's prosperity and food security needs trade. Geopolitical developments have dictated that the EU strengthens its ties with its global partners and we see this playing out in the EU's current trade policy – insisting on reciprocal standards completely contradicts this goal. Borders will close to the EU in response to such prescriptive measures, especially if non-WTO compliant.

## Alternative approach to standard-setting

Decisions on standard-setting cannot take place unilaterally and should be reserved for multilateral fora such as WTO. The benchmarking system should be developed further to facilitate these standard-setting conversations.

#keepitalldmoving

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