

Brussels, 26 March 2020 – Copa-Cogeca, FoodDrinkEurope and EuroCommerce represent the core actors in the European food supply chain: farmers and agri-cooperatives, food and drink manufacturers, and wholesale and retail distribution.

In these challenging times, our farmers and businesses **strive day and night to get food and drink to all Europeans every day**. We are working together, also with many other businesses in the agri-food supply chain, and with the European institutions to ensure our **collective response is coordinated** and effective, both in the short and long-term.

We **pay tribute to all of those across society** who are working tirelessly to deal with the Covid-19 public health crisis. In the food supply chain, committed people on our farms, in our factories, on the roads, and in our shops and supermarkets are giving all their energy, time, and dedication to fulfil this important mission: feeding people.

We will do all in our power to ensure our **food systems continue to function sustainably and effectively** throughout the health crisis and the confinement measures taken.

We emphasise that our industries and workforce must be **recognised as essential** to maintain our activities and ensure safe, affordable and quality food for our consumers. We ask that the **borders remain open** for people and for freight to fulfill this essential mission.

We **offer** to work **with the European institutions** through a **structured dialogue** to ensure that the response to Covid-19 is coordinated and effective, both during the crisis and in its aftermath.