

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.