

**CEETTAR calls for fair competition in the agricultural sector**  
***“Agriculture: A new Europe with new responses”***

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**Whereas:**

1. Agricultural rural contractors currently represent 75,000 enterprises and 380,000 workers, i.e. company directors and employees in the European Union.
2. Employment and the conservation of the environment are at the heart of the priorities set forth by the European Union with the aim of attaining a high standard of living and social protection for Europeans.
3. EU legislators have continuously regulated, via the common agricultural policy (CAP), and ever closer to the situation on the ground, the conditions for production and markets for farm products.
4. The reforms of the common agricultural policy are deeply transforming the conditions under which this activity is being carried out and tend to encourage complementary income sources and increased economic competition.
5. The development of new, strengthened and diversified methods for production, employment and skills offers an opportunity to develop the provision of services via specialized enterprises.
6. The lack of employment is more worrisome in the rural zones of the EU member states. The ARCs have quickly and appropriately taken up the challenge of new and potential technologies in farm production and rural areas.
7. Their driving force in terms of technology and the production process for new, more qualifying practices unquestionably increases demand on farms and, consequently, the demand for more selective employment and more highly qualified jobs.
8. To date, in spite of repeated demands, it has not been possible to have the contribution of RCs recognized and to encourage specialized enterprises, which are a source of activities and jobs.

**CEETTAR has nonetheless noted that:**

9. The EU’s farm policy favours certain ways of reducing costs and fixed assets of farmers and encourages them through the granting of subsidies but ignores other means, such as the provision of services by specialized enterprises.
- 10.** Along with the ongoing mechanization of farming, an uneven evolution has been observed in the granting of aid, depending, in particular, on the person doing the

purchasing. Subsidies were, and still are, granted both to the farmer purchasing equipment on his own behalf and to those who join with others in a co-op.

11. The second pillar of the CAP with the FEADER, focusing on rural and agricultural development, which in its principles calls on all forms of dynamism and skills from all the holdings set up in the rural areas, is, in fact, truly open only to forestry enterprises and in the main is closed to ARCs.
12. Agricultural equipment acquired with subsidies is regularly used beyond the context and outside the limits defined by EU rules, in particular as regards:
  - The geographic area for the use of the equipment
  - The authorised work volume for third parties.
  - Environmental protection.
  - The use of the equipment for public services and works for municipal units, for tasks often completely unrelated to agriculture.

In this context, CEETTAR can only note and deplore, in accordance with the practices of free competition and the single market, that:

The contribution of the 75. 000 agricultural and forestry enterprises to employment and competitiveness in the EU is a lever that should be used to renew the traditional approach to agricultural competitiveness, to return to the objectives set forth in regulations and to organize **fair competition among these enterprises**.

#### **Wherefore, CEETTAR once again calls on**

- the European Parliament,
- the Economic and Social Committee (ESC),
- the competent services of the European Commission

To conduct studies on:

- employment and skills in the provision of services in the European Union
- the competitiveness of various means of possessing and using farm equipment;
- energy savings by agricultural and forestry equipment
- all the differences that subsist in the various EU member states in the fields of taxation, social contributions, the highway code and regulations, the signalization of farm vehicles, etc.
- The different treatment given to RCs compared to farm holdings and/or co-ops.
- The promotion of quality and the provision of services.
- The qualification of the workforce in relation to the use of information technology and environmental protection.

- Agricultural, rural and forestry work in a bid to harmonize and eliminate differences, which take on greater importance as the EU enlarges

**CEETTAR resolutely insists that:**

**Concrete measures should at last be taken as promptly as possible for an official recognition of the profession it represents so as to accord agricultural work contractors the same benefits and subsidies for their technical equipment and appropriate technologies that co-ops receive under the Feader, so as to promote their indispensable, constantly changing contribution to reasonable production and sustainable rural development with the aim of including contractors in the reflection on the new CAP and the new fledgling Europe, within its current borders and looking beyond 2013.**