

## **CEETTAR calls for fair competition in the agricultural sector** *“Equal charges for equal obligations”*

---

### **Whereas :**

1. The main objectives set by the Treaty of Rome in 1957 include the will to create a Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).
2. Since this decision, the European legislator has regulated continuously, and always close to the actual situation in the field, the conditions for the production and sale of agricultural products.
3. The rapid development and profound changes of agriculture and the conditions under which it is carried out (quality, environment, maintenance) have led to the development of new efficient and diversified production methods, jobs and skills.
4. To a growing extent, these new methods are developed by specialised companies that have contributed to replacing or completing the traditional methods and specific activities of traditional agricultural production.
5. Through their interventions in the field, the Agricultural Rural Contractors (ARCs) have in the last years contributed to reducing the cost and fixed assets of farmers, and in so doing strengthened the economic situation and income of the latter.
6. The ARCs have pertinently and rapidly taken up the new current and potential technological challenges of agricultural production.
7. Their driving role in terms of technology and the production process for new, more qualifying practices definitely feeds the demand of farms and thus more efficient services and more selective and uses qualified jobs.
8. To this day, in spite of repeated demands, it has not been possible to adopt a professional, harmonised definition of the ARCs in the Member States or at EU level.

### **CEETTAR has nonetheless noted that:**

9. With the ongoing mechanisation of agriculture, disparate changes have occurred in how aid is granted, in particular depending on the type of purchaser. In fact, subsidies were and still are granted both to the farmer acquiring equipment for his own account, and to those who create cooperatives with others.
10. CAP support measures provided regularly as direct all are also geared exclusively to farmers or their economic organisations, in particular for the acquisition of agricultural equipment.
11. Agricultural equipment acquired with sizeable subsidies is often used beyond the context and limits explicitly defined by European regulations, in particular as regards:

- The geographic area for the use of the equipment;
- The authorised work volume for third parties;
- The use of the equipment for services and public works for municipal units, for tasks often completely unrelated to agriculture (clearing snow, maintaining green spaces, etc).

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

12. Contrary to the spirit of the objectives set by the regulations, certain types of use of subsidised agricultural equipment constitute unfair competition for these companies.

**Wherefor, CEETTAR calls on**

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

to conduct studies on:

- certain dubious practices of using “subsidised” agricultural equipment not in accordance with the established regulations;
- all the disparities in the different EU member states in terms of taxation, social legislation, the price of diesel, regulations and the highway code for the transport of equipment;
- the different treatment of ARCs by comparison with farming concerns or cooperatives;
- the introduction of a progressive regulation of agricultural, rural, and forest technical work with a view to harmonisation and an elimination of disparities.

**CEETTAR calls, with force and determination for:**

Concrete measures to be taken as promptly as possible for an official recognition of the profession it represents so as to accord agricultural work contractors the same advantages, subsidies, taxation and other benefits in their technical and other equipment and appropriate technologies, so as to promote their indispensable, constantly changing contribution to sustainable rural development throughout the European Union, now even more in the nascent geographic and economic whole from the enlargement in progress.