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Brussels,

Dear [REDACTED],

I would like to thank you for your letter of 2 April 2020 to Executive Vice-President Timmermans and to Commissioner Wojciechowski and myself, to which I am replying also on their behalf. I would also like to thank you for your contribution to the feedback mechanism on the Farm to Fork Strategy roadmap.

In your letter, you express the support of Copa-Cogeca for the transition to a sustainable production and consumption system but ask the Commission to postpone the adoption of the Farm to Fork Strategy, because of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the farming sector and on the food system in general. I fully acknowledge and understand the difficulties currently faced by the food sector due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the new challenges it has created. Together with the Member States and all involved actors, the Commission is working hard to mitigate these impacts by taking the necessary actions and by stimulating the economic recovery. On behalf of the Commission, I would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to Copa and Cogeca, and to farmers in general, for the positive attitude and support in addressing the effects of the current crises.

The COVID-19 pandemic brings to the fore the importance of a robust and resilient food system capable of ensuring access to a sufficient supply of affordable food for citizens in all circumstances and shows that sustainability is rooted in our ability to deliver simultaneously on the environmental, economic, health and social objectives of the Green Deal. The Commission

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therefore considers that the Farm to Fork Strategy should be adopted as soon as possible, together with the Biodiversity Strategy.

The ambitions of the Farm to Fork Strategy will also have to be reflected in the CAP post 2020, so Member States will have to consider the objectives and targets of the strategy in their National Strategic Plans. Therefore Member States need clarity on these objectives and targets. Furthermore, actors in the food value chain need to be able to take these objectives and targets into consideration when making decisions for investments.

The Farm to Fork Strategy is the beginning of a process, with ample room for consultation and discussion with the Council, the European Parliament as well as with stakeholders. It will therefore take time before the ambitions as laid down in the strategy will be reflected in regulatory and non-regulatory actions. In this process, also the effects and lessons learned from the Covid-19 crisis will be taken into account, as we are striving to reach a sustainable, resilient food system.

I thank you again for your timely and valuable contribution and look very much forward to our close cooperation on the Farm to Fork Strategy and action plan.

Yours sincerely,

(e-signed)

Stella Kyriakides

Cc: Mr Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission,
Green Deal
Mr Janusz Wojciechowski, Member of the European Commission for Agriculture