



MEDIA STATEMENT 7th FORUM FOR THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

Brussels, 1 April 2014

FFA2014 calls for the prioritization of innovation and knowledge transfer to accelerate the drive for safety and sustainability in agriculture

- **Farmers and land managers should be properly incentivized and offered the right tools, technologies and know-how to produce efficiently and sustainably;**
- **Stimulate collaboration between public and private sector to leverage basic and applied research in agriculture;**
- **EU decision makers must ensure that the policies and subsidies driving sustainable agriculture are simple, practical, innovative and scalable;**
- **TTIP negotiations should consider sustainability as well as reducing trade and regulatory barriers in order to boost today's \$26.5 billion EU-US trade in agriculture.**

Today's Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA) called for the prioritization of innovation and knowledge transfer, as well as the removal of trade and regulatory barriers, to accelerate the achievement of sustainable agriculture.

The report of the International Panel on Climate Change, which once again highlighted the threat to global food security, demonstrates the urgent need for stakeholders to think differently and creatively about how to achieve sustainability in agriculture.

In particular, FFA2014 delegates highlighted Europe's challenge of its resource intensive economy and demand for high quality, safe, affordable food with the smart use of land. This specifically means conserving water, improving soil fertility, and – where possible – reducing the use of inputs like pesticides and fertilizers.

Thinking differently about how to address this challenge means enabling the public and private sector to collaborate much more closely to provide farmers and land managers with the tools, technologies and know-how they need. Equally, politicians must ensure that their policies, subsidies and penalties are simple, practical, innovative and scalable and deliver the right public goods as well as stimulating more innovation in agriculture.

In a specific message to EU and US trade negotiators, FFA delegates called for both sides to consider how any future agreement could promote innovation and sustainability in agriculture, as well as reducing trade and regulatory barriers. Addressing this topic, speakers agreed, however, that progress on regulatory coherence was pivotal, since critical points concerning GMOs, use of hormones in food and geographical indicators are still highly contentious.

The TTIP is probably a once in generation opportunity to not only boost the \$26.5 billion worth of trade but also to accelerate progress toward a globally sustainable agriculture system.

Commenting after his keynote speech, former WTO Director-General, Pascal Lamy said: *“Agriculture and trade are inextricably linked and Europe with its world-class quality products has much to gain from a well-balanced market opening.”*

FFA Conference Chairman, Franz Fischler, commented: *“FFA2014 calls on farmers, land managers and policy makers to be innovative in the design and implementation of the sustainable intensification of agriculture. They must cooperate and focus on measures and farm practices to make agricultural production more efficient and sustainable so as to deliver tangible benefits to society overall.”*

John Atkin, Chief Operating Officer of Syngenta and FFA Co-Founder, said: *“We need a more ambitious policy framework when it comes to the sustainable intensification of agriculture. If the opportunity is taken, TTIP, along with CAP and the US Farm Bill, can create a new impetus which makes all of us think differently and more creatively about how we boost crop productivity, make better use of soil and water in farming, and enhance biodiversity.”*

Speaking on behalf of the European Commission, Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik, said: *“We face a growing population estimated to reach 9 billion by 2045, and the demand for food, feed and fiber will rise by 70%. But land is finite and the natural resources we have today are the same ones needed by future generations. It is obvious that we need to use resources more efficiently.”*

Marc Vanheukelen, Head of Cabinet of EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht, brought FFA2014 to a close by reassuring delegates that, *“We are making good progress on the EU-US trade and investment agreement. Our objective is clear. We want to remove barriers to trade and ensure jobs, growth and high standards across all sectors, particularly agriculture.”*

FFA2014 focused on the issue of “Meeting the food and environmental challenge: How to sustainably produce more with less and trade better”. The 7th edition featured around 1,500 participants and a raft of high level speakers, including **Pascal LAMY**, Honorary President, Notre Europe–Jacques Delors Institute, **Janez POTOČNIK**, EU Commissioner for the Environment, European Commission, **Marc VANHEUKELEN**, Head of Cabinet of EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht, Oliver **DE SCHUTTER**, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, United Nations, **John ATKIN**, COO, Syngenta and **Robert Lewis CARLSON**, President of the World Farmers’ Organization.

About the FFA

The annual Forum is an initiative of the European Landowners’ Organization (ELO) and Syngenta. It brings together a diverse range of stakeholders to catalyze thinking on the way European agriculture needs to respond to the major challenges that it faces in delivering food and environmental security. The Forum was created in 2008 in response to a belief that many EU policies impacting on agriculture are focused on solving yesterday’s problems, such as overproduction, and do not deal with new challenges and market opportunities. Challenges include feeding a growing world population, demand for a higher quality diet, increased demand for renewable sources of energy and changing weather patterns. With limited arable land available, there is a need to sustainably maximize production from that already under cultivation.

www.forumforagriculture.com

About the ELO

The European Landowners' Organization (ELO), created in 1972, is a unique federation of national associations from the 28 EU Member States and beyond which represents the interests of landowners, land managers and rural entrepreneurs at the European political level. Independent and non-profit, ELO is the only organization able to stand for all rural entrepreneurs. ELO aims at promoting a prosperous countryside through the dynamism of private landowners. Its Secretariat is based in Brussels.

www.elo.org

About Syngenta

Syngenta is one of the world's leading companies with more than 28,000 employees in over 90 countries dedicated to our purpose: Bringing plant potential to life. Through world-class science, global reach and commitment to our customers we help to increase crop productivity, protect the environment and improve health and quality of life.

www.syngenta.com or www.goodgrowthplan.com

About the RISE Foundation

The Rural Investment Support for Europe (RISE) Foundation is the only pan-European foundation devoted to the conservation and development of the rural world. Chaired by Franz Fischler, it deals with policy analysis and project financing.

www.risefoundation.eu

Media contacts:

European Landowners' Organization

Julianna Nagy julianna.nagy@elo.org; +32 (0)2 235 20 03

Syngenta

Sabine Hoffmann sabine.hoffmann@syngenta.com; +41 61 323 58 41