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CIBE PRESS STATEMENT

The CIBE TRCC (Technical and Reception Control Committee) meeting took place on 8th September in Hanover at the kind invitation of the association of North Germany sugar beet growers' association (DNZ), ahead of Sugar Beet Expo and Potato Europe 2026 on 9th and 10th September. It was an excellent occasion to take stock of the challenges and new developments of good practices in sugar beet cultivation. At a time when the 2026/27 European sugar beet crop is facing a severe downturn, driven by a combination of reduced acreage and devastating summer weather, marking a two decades low in terms of production and a significant decline compared to the 5-year average, these exchanges were particularly timely.

"The challenges that sugar beet growers are facing should not lead anyone to forget what they have accomplished especially in terms of environmental sustainability. These achievements are remarkable: sugar beet growers have done the job, they have delivered", highlighted Krzysztof Nykiel, Chair of CIBE TRCC. The discussions highlighted:

- A drastic decrease in the availability of active substances in sugar beet cultivation, over 30 active substances according to CIBE, which leads to the fact that many considered as hazardous, are no longer approved in the EU and thus no longer available for beet growers.
- A significant improvement of good agronomic practices and integrated management thanks to the work done by the sugar beet institutes and related advisory services: from the optimisation of fertilisation to the implementation of decision-support tools and digitalisation.
- A leading role in the implementation of low carbon practices.

"It is time now to recognise these achievements and for the EU Institutions and the Member States to take stock of the related costs, to urgently learn the lessons of unresolved challenges in terms of crop protection and act accordingly, because this progress is under threat and many growers are now between despair and resignation" added Krzysztof Nykiel. European beet growers call on the EU Institutions:

- to support them facing the negative consequences, higher costs and trade-offs,
- to urgently stop the depletion of sugar beet growers' crop protection toolbox and to avoid further ban of active substances without solutions,
- to implement risk-based, fair and context-specific evaluation of active substances to financially support the huge need for research and development as well as for investments necessary to further develop alternative efficient solutions and practices,
- to rapidly ensure level-playing field in terms of standards of production with third competitors.

"These are the necessary conditions for the resilience and sustainability of sugar beet in Europe. It is the moment of truth: if these conditions are not met, sugar beet growers will not be able to further meet these challenges", concluded Krzysztof Nykiel.

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