



European Consortium
of the Organic-Based Fertilizer
Industry

European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Bruxelles, Belgium
Via email

Brussels, 3 April 2020

Fertilising products including organic-based fertilisers help keep the food chain producing

Covid-related issues could impact food supply and prices in several months if not resolved

To the attention of the European Commission crisis and response teams on the Coronavirus:

Like many other producers of fertilising products and other agricultural inputs, the organic-based fertiliser industry is facing particular challenges resulting from the covid-19 pandemic. While authorities and the Commission are aware of some of these problems, others are not as well known. Understandably, authorities are focusing on the most pressing issues of the sanitary crisis, but **agriculture is seasonal**. Delays can mean missing an entire growing season or, in some cases, a full year. Spring is especially time-sensitive for planting, fertilisation, etc.

Refined organic-based fertilisers are products that improve plant yield and quality, enhance nutrient use efficiency, and boost the carbon capture capacity and climate resilience of soils while reducing the need for other inputs. Refined organic-based fertilising products have a constrained shelf-life. They need to be applied in the field at precise times and rates, depending on the farmer's integrated plant nutrient and soil fertility management plans.

Supply disruptions of organic-based fertilisers and other agricultural inputs could have detrimental effects on the food supply in several months, potentially reducing food supply and driving up prices just when Europe finds itself amid a post-pandemic recession. Moreover, some farmers are struggling to sell their fresh produce in the current climate. Without this income, it is difficult for them to finance the planting of their summer crops. This will reduce the summer harvest, thus driving up prices and reducing food supply, aggravating post-pandemic food security concerns further. European farmers may therefore require extraordinary liquidity assistance from the Union in the coming weeks and months.

Our industry is already suffering from impacts on production, distribution, and both upstream and downstream links in the food supply chain. Transport shortages and border controls are making it difficult for organic-based fertilisers to reach the farmers who need them in time. Two of the countries that are worst hit by the pandemic (France and Italy) are particularly crucial for the production of organic-based fertilisers in Europe. You can find more detailed information on these points in the Annex attached to this letter.

We would like to ask you for support in ensuring the continuity of our supply to farmers so that they can keep producing the safe, fresh, and high-quality food European citizens rely on. One

over-arching recommendation from ECOFI is that **all agri-input industries should be considered essential sectors** when authorities are determining which are strategic.

Our industry is ready to support the Commission in any way possible to address this crisis and help protect the health and safety of citizens, including their access to food.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for more information or if we can help provide you with any further data.

Yours sincerely,

Quentin Protsenko

President

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