

## **Joint Declaration**

**of the Ministers of Agriculture of the countries of the Three Seas Region  
(Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland,  
Romania and Slovakia)**

**on the possibility of securing feed protein production in the Three Seas Region**

**Kraków, 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2021**

We, the Ministers of Agriculture of the countries of the Three Seas Region (Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia):

RECOGNISE the problem of the feed protein deficit resulting from the needs of the livestock sector, and the European Union's dependence on imports of plant protein for animal feed from third countries in the face of restrictions resulting, among other things, from the impossibility of using processed animal protein (PAP) in livestock feed;

NOTE that only a few per cent of arable land in the European Union is intended for protein crops and that more than 75% of plant protein demand is covered by imports;

WELCOME the European Union's efforts to reduce dependence on imported plant protein;

CONSIDER that a horizontal, common European Union policy based on better use of indigenous resources and on local production can counteract the high dependence on imports;

SUPPORT THE IDEA of taking centralised measures, aligned at EU level to reduce dependence on plant protein imports;

UNDERLINE the economic and social role of farmers in providing the food security of the EU, which requires support through targeted measures and/or instruments, ensuring access to resources, among which to feed protein production;

NOTE that the measures must be planned over a number of years and must include market changes that will increase demand for seeds of domestic leguminous plants and soybeans and result in a greater share of these plants as a source of protein in feed;

AGREE that increasing protein crop cultivation can be an important complement to the efforts to achieve the objectives of the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy;

HIGHLIGHT the advantages and benefits of protein crops and soya for the environment, such as protecting biodiversity, reduced use of fertilisers, improved soil quality and fertility, and proper crop rotation which contributes to reducing diseases resulting from the maintenance of monocultures repeated over the years;

POINT OUT that the European Union has experience in the production of rapeseed, the by-products of which are a valuable source of feed protein. Locally produced rapeseed is a valuable raw material for the food industry, for the production of renewable energy and for the chemical industry, and the by-product obtained after oil pressing is a source of feed protein, making the reduction of imported feed already possible;

NOTICE that the second most valuable and multi-faceted crop in use after oilseed rape may be soya. Therefore, we STRESS that further scientific and breeding research dedicated to the genetic improvement of the varieties of these crop varieties is needed to enhance the competitiveness of leguminous plants and soybeans as feed ingredients. It is also necessary to conduct varietal experimentation with soya to promote its cultivation in the EU;

EMPHASISE the importance of new varieties breeding and need for development of different tools accessible to scientists and farmers while respecting the legal framework of the member states;

CONSIDER that cooperation between scientists, protein crop producers and the food and feed industries is necessary for success. To build a functioning market for protein crops, equal treatment and financial support for every link - scientists, farmers and industry - is needed;

NOTE that existing support mechanisms for protein crop production in the European Union are still insufficient and do not translate into efficient use of native protein crops in feed production;

STRESS that measures to strengthen the use of plant proteins produced in European Union countries must be adopted at EU level, preceded by an impact assessment;

SUPPORT meeting the expectations of consumers who want to have a free choice, by allowing clear identification in production, reliable and controlled labelling of products under market schemes;

ENCOURAGE the promotion of plant protein production in the EU;

EXPECT that targeted actions will improve the EU's level of protein security.

for the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry:

Bulgaria: .....

for the Ministry of Agriculture:

Croatia: .....

for the Ministry of Agriculture:

Czech Republic: .....

for the Ministry of Rural Affairs:

Estonia: .....

for the Ministry of Agriculture:

Hungary: .....

for the Ministry of Agriculture:

Latvia: .....

for the Ministry of Agriculture:

Lithuania: .....

for the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development:

Poland: .....

for the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development:

Romania: .....

for the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development:

Slovakia: .....