

Brussels  
Tuesday, 27 June 2023

## PRESS STATEMENT

### CEFS CONGRESS CELEBRATES 70 YEARS WITH REFLECTIONS ON DECARBONISATION AND AGRICULTURAL COMPETITIVENESS

CEFS' annual Congress took place on 21-23 June 2023, hosted by Cosun Beet Company in Maastricht. It marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CEFS, which was established in 1953. The programme focused on decarbonisation and agricultural competitiveness, bringing together two panels with participants from the European Commission, Farm Europe, COGEN Europe, Euroseeds, and the Dutch sugar beet research institute IRS.

On decarbonisation panellists discussed the tools available for the sugar industry and what policies are needed to get there. Morgane Esteve of Tereos said: "The EU sugar sector and Tereos have set ambitious goals: achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 can only be achieved through a mix of different solutions: energy efficiency, renewable energy and low-carbon agriculture."

For the European beet sugar sector to implement solutions and decarbonise effectively, we need financial support and a legislative framework that is fit for purpose. CEFS Director-General Marie-Christine Ribera said: "Here, the implementation of the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) III by Member States to ensure that sugar beet residues can be used for energetic use is crucial. We also need the energetic use of biomass residues to be exempt from the revised Energy Taxation Directive (ETD)."

The congress also addressed the agricultural aspect of beet sugar production. Keynote speaker, filmmaker and author Hidde Boersma presented a new perspective on sustainable food production, advocating for intensive agricultural production in specific zones while dedicating more land to nature and biodiversity. A second roundtable entitled "Challenges and opportunities for sugar beet cultivation" discussed the impact of the proposal for a new Regulation on the Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products (SUR) on plant breeding and seed production, challenges in contracting sugar beet, and the forthcoming proposal on New Genomic Techniques (NGTs).

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For more information on the EU beet sugar industry, please consult:

[European Sugar Statistics Report for the marketing year 2021/22](#)

[The EU Sugar Industry Corporate Social Responsibility Report 2020-21](#)

**About CEFS:**

CEFS, the European Association of Sugar Manufacturers, is an international non-profit organisation and a recognised interlocutor for the EU Institutions since 1953, sharing knowledge and technical expertise on sugar.

CEFS' membership is composed of sugar-producing companies in the EU and Switzerland.

Find out more about CEFS and the EU beet sugar industry [here](#).