

Brussels, 09 January 2026

EU-MERCOSUR AGREEMENT BETRAYS THE EU SUGAR BEET SECTOR

CIBE and CEFS deeply regret the adoption by the Council of the EU-Mercosur agreement.

This agreement would enable 190,000 tonnes of duty-free sugar with low production standards to enter the EU market. This volume – the equivalent to the annual production of an EU beet sugar factory – will add to the numerous duty-free market access concessions already granted over the past decade and to the significant quantities of Brazilian sugar already entering the EU market under existing quotas and special procedures. The result will be further negative cumulative impacts on the EU sugar market to the detriment of EU sugar beet growers and processors.

“In total 20 beet sugar factories have been closed since the end of production quotas in 2017. 5 factories have been closed in the past year in the context of low sugar prices. Contradictory EU policies are putting our sector under additional pressure,” said Giovanni Tamburini, CEFS President.

“There are no requirements in terms of reciprocity in the agricultural production standards of Mercosur countries and given the huge divergence between the two parties on that point, this jeopardises our medium and long -term competitiveness and sustainability. It is a betrayal of EU sugar beet growers by the Commission and the Member States”, added Marcel Jehaes, CIBE President.

Furthermore, the so-called safeguard remains purely symbolic, with no practical relevance for operators. It does not provide protection and would leave our sector exposed and at risk of long -term, structural damage.

For these reasons, CIBE and CEFS repeat our strong opposition to the EU-Mercosur agreement.

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PRESS RELEASE



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