

## View on Usability of EFSA Outputs

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# Copa and Cogeca



## Who are Copa and Cogeca:

- Copa: Created in 1958, Copa represents 23 million European farmers and family members.
- Cogeca: Created in 1959, Cogeca represents 22,000 European agricultural cooperatives.

## Mission:

- To ensure a sustainable, innovative and competitive EU agriculture and agri-food sector capable of meeting growing food demand

## How?

- By promoting European farmers and agri-cooperatives views to influence EU decision-makers, media, public opinion

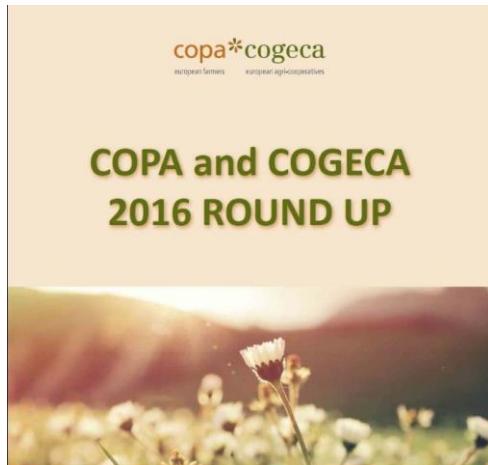
# Copa and Cogeca

## The Working Parties

- 45 Working Parties, dealing with markets, all the agricultural sectors and policies

## Topics:

- 25 agricultural sectors covered, CAP, Animal nutrition, food and feed safety, phytosanitary questions, animal health & welfare, cooperative affairs, rural development, biotechnology, environment...



# Role of EFSA for EU farmers and their cooperatives

- Copa and Cogeca are and have always been a strong supporter of the mission and objectives of EFSA ever since its inception
- We fully support the steps taken to guarantee that EFSA assumed its role of an independent, transparent and efficient EU authority that ensures safe food to European consumers
- Copa and Cogeca fully acknowledge the need for risk assessment (RA) to take place in a transparent and independent environment. This is fundamental to guarantee unbiased RA
- EU farmers and agri-cooperatives also appreciate the opportunity to engage in a debate on the usability of EFSA's outputs and clear communications of the scientific opinions to the users

# When EFSA communicates...

## **Who is receiving the information?**

- Professionals in the agri-food sector
- General public – citizens, consumers...
- Policy makers

## **How is the information received:**

- Via Public Authorities and EFSA directly
- Via professional organisations (EU and national organisations, i.e. Copa and Cogeca)
- Via media users

## **Main channels:**

Emails, information notes, Workshops, etc but *what about social media?*

# How to communicate EFSA's outputs?

## Is there a need to differentiate the way in which EFSA communicates depending on the channel?

- Effective communication is key for everyone – necessary to have it **down and across the organisations**
- Organisations need to communicate information to their members or workers on the risk to their health and safety identified in their risk assessments, and the preventive and protective measures necessary to control risk in a **professional manner**
- The information provided should be communicated appropriately, taking into account some elements such as:
  - *workers' levels of competence*
  - *the structure and size of the organisation*
- **Public Authorities** also play a key role to disseminate risk communication and to support EFSA

# How to communicate scientific uncertainties?

## Important to look at scientific uncertainties:

- Nobody likes uncertainty – Nevertheless, in many cases we cannot be completely certain

## How to communicate in this case?

- Farmers and agri-cooperatives and probably everybody on the receiving end of risk communications prefers those **communications to be definitive**, not tentative.
- But unfortunately the concept of “risk” is intrinsically uncertain
- It is essential to be very professional and to pay attention to the way in which the message is provided considering as much as possible the scientific uncertainty
- It is fundamental to avoid spreading unfounded information, which could unsettle the public, jeopardise consumer confidence and create market problems

# Some conclusions

- Copa and Cogeca are and have always been a strong supporter of the mission and objectives of EFSA ever since its inception
- Farmers and agri-cooperatives rely on scientific risk assessment to take the pertinent decisions on risk management by Public Authorities, professionals and consumers
- We believe it is essential to foster good communication between the different actors and EFSA on scientific matters
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- Building trust in the food chain is key to innovate and further enhance the competitiveness of the sector.
- Important to look at the uncertainty – and the way this is communicated
- It is fundamental to avoid spreading unfounded information, which could unsettle the public, jeopardise consumer confidence and create market problems
- It is also key to ensure the proper functioning of the internal market via a suitable communication policy in cases of risk or during crises