



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Director-General

Mr Jerzy Plewa

Director General Agriculture and Rural Development

Opening speech European Fruit and Vegetables Market Observatory Kick-off meeting opening

DG AGRI Brussels, 18 October 2019

- I am pleased to welcome you at this first meeting of the European Fruit and Vegetables Market Observatory.
- Having established Market Observatories for Milk, Meat, Crops and Sugar in recent years, the time has come to complete the range of products covered by our current structures on market transparency.
- Today's meeting is the fulfilment of a commitment to extend to the fruit and vegetables sector the successful story of the existing Market Observatories, in line with the recommendations of the Agri-Markets Task Force.
- This Market Observatory also meets the demands of stakeholders in the fruit and vegetables sector and is set up

with the aim to ensure more market transparency by disseminating market data and short-term analysis.

- The purpose is to build discussion platforms, to evaluate market developments and to highlight and assess the current market situation, for the sake of economic operators and Commission services.
- With a share of 24.1% of the total EU agricultural output in value, the EU fruit and vegetables sector is essential to the European agriculture.
- The sector is key to supply the EU food markets, contributes to the competitiveness of our food industry, and plays an essential role in the competitiveness of EU agricultural products at global level.
- Your response to our call for applications and your presence here today proves your interest and willingness, as main players in the sector, to take advantage of this new tool that we are putting in place today. We expect a high level of contribution from your side, because it is indispensable to the success of this Fruit and Vegetables Market Observatory.
- Being the first meeting, part of today's gathering will be dedicated to introduce the structure and functioning of the Observatory as well as to adopt the Rules of Procedure of this Economic Board in line with the general procedures for Commission's experts groups.

- Subsequently, my colleagues will give a demonstration of the Fruit and Vegetables Market Observatory website, explain the data sources that are currently used, and propose a discussion on possible data improvements and the role and contributions from you, the member organisations. Later on, we would like to discuss the current market situation with you.
- Building on the experience of the existing Market Observatories, the Fruit and Vegetables Market Observatory has been conceived as a dynamic instrument to provide a detailed analysis, carried out by the relevant actors themselves, of the market situation in the short term.
- It is for this reason that the Observatory should be based both on the assessment and on the dissemination of market data.
- The Observatory will allow for an increased gathering and assessment of market data and statistics, will produce reports and will provide market information accessible to all via a dedicated website.
- Quality and reliability will be of the highest possible standard.
- These assessments and data will complement the already available information. In this regard, your comments on

additional data needs, as well as any further communication expectations from your side, will be more than welcome.

- The website will be regularly updated and include all the market data to be disseminated. Stakeholders in the milk, meat, crops and sugar sectors appreciate the dedicated websites and frequently visit them to get latest market insight.
- I would also like to draw your attention to certain aspects, which I believe to be particularly relevant for your involvement and the success of the Observatory.
- You are a part of the Observatory in your capacity as market experts. As designated representatives of your respective organisations, you are expected to contribute with your expertise objectively and constructively.
- Each one of you will of course provide views based on your experience in the supply chain. However, the Observatory is not a forum for political statements. This should be very clear from the outset.
- We will all benefit from the outcome of the discussions of the Observatory. You, the relevant actors of the supply chain, will be able to take your decisions with a deeper knowledge of the market situation and trends. And public authorities, including the Commission, will be better equipped to decide about policy instruments if the situation so requires.

- Our ambition is for the Observatory to become an additional and useful tool to assist the Commission in its market management duties.
- This is what the existing Market Observatories have been doing for some time now and I am sure the Fruit, and Vegetables Market Observatory will rapidly acquire the same authority and credibility.
- I finish my intervention by recalling the importance of this new project, and by stressing how essential your commitment is to make this initiative a success.
- Thank you all in advance for your cooperation.