

**Speech by Commissioner Phil Hogan**  
**at the G20 Agriculture Ministers Meeting**  
**Istanbul, 8 May 2015**

- Minister Eker, my thanks to you, first of all, for your initiative and persistence in keeping the themes of food security and food loss and waste on the G20 priority list for 2015.
  
- Thank you also for the initiative to move forward the work on a G20 Action Plan on Food Security and Sustainable Food Systems and the creation of a food loss and waste platform, to share country experiences. Congratulations to all delegations for the good, constructive work.
  
- Ladies and Gentlemen, Agriculture is humankind's primary occupation – the only economic activity which can be truly said to nourish the world.
  
- The nations of the G20 represent 65% of all agricultural land, 77% of global cereal production and 80% of world trade in agricultural products. Our influence on global agriculture is significant, as is our responsibility.

- The principle of food security is entirely compatible with the G20's core mission: to restore strong, sustainable and balanced growth to the global economy.
- However, while the principles of enhanced food security and reduced food waste are not new for this organisation, it is opportune for us today - as guardians of the agricultural sector - to renew our commitment to these principles, and resolve to widen and deepen our structures for cooperation.
- Europe has a deep well of experience in shared agricultural governance. We have reformed our Common Agricultural Policy, which operates in the 28 member states of the EU and its 500 million citizens, to be more dynamic and market oriented.
- As a result we have seen considerable investment and innovation flowing into agri-businesses. Our goal is to consistently and sustainably produce high quality product for consumers the world over.

- We believe this makes sense, and that our policies will deliver food security, incentivise waste reduction, nurture the environment, but also – crucially – demonstrate that working in agriculture can be good business, particularly for younger people.
- Giving farmers the freedom to participate in the global market will serve all these goals. Let me be clear: the subsidies and protectionism of another era are gone, and we must all adapt to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century accordingly, and with confidence.
- Nonetheless, targeted measures can incentivise farmers to play their part in our shared ambitions. Intelligent policy and sound governance can be real catalysts for change, and many of the instruments already employed by the G20 are entirely fit for this purpose - the challenge for us is to develop them in full, and expand them where appropriate.
- Together, we must develop sustainable food systems and focus the international debate on increasing productivity, while continuing to address climate change and the sustainable management of natural resources.

- We must promote a knowledge-based agriculture, strengthening research and innovation, and bridging the communication gap between farmers, researchers and agribusiness. By transmitting research outcomes to farmers, and incentivising them to participate in the right research projects, we unleash their potential to drive the changes we are discussing here today.
- Agriculture has always been an innovative sector, but the global food imperatives are now of such a magnitude that we need to innovate more, and innovate faster, if we are to achieve our goals. **Agriculture must continue to become more productive and more efficient.**
- We must therefore continue to strengthen the Agriculture Market Information System and enhance the contribution of the annual Meeting of the Agriculture Chief Scientists.
- We must broaden the burden of food waste reduction to include the manufacturing, retail and consumer levels. Indeed, the main players in these sectors must begin to take a greater degree of responsibility in this shared challenge, and I encourage them to engage constructively in the coming months.

- We must likewise focus on reducing on-farm and post-harvest losses for farmers.
- Finally – and crucially - we must create the enabling environment to bring the private sector fully into this equation: productivity and sustainability cannot be achieved without investment. This means developing appropriate and accessible financial instruments on multiple levels, to provide farmers with the finance to support the significant on-farm investment required to facilitate these changes. This is a model we are currently pursuing with vigour and determination in the European Union.

### ***(Conclusion)***

- Ladies and gentlemen, our fundamental shared challenge is this: how can we increase production while respecting our natural resources and reducing waste - **how can we produce more, using less?**
- The EU "farm family" has 28 members, with differing needs and expectations, and we have learned many lessons during our shared journey towards a modern agricultural policy. We are

willing, and committed, to sharing this bank of knowledge with our global partners.

- In Europe, we consider our farmers to be custodians of the soil. As policymakers, our aim is to give them the tools and supports to produce more food – efficiently, productively, and sustainably.
- I believe this goal is harmonious with the ambitions expressed by Ministers present today. Let us therefore resolve to work together, in every possible forum, with every willing partner, to provide the global leadership needed.
- Europe stands ready to play its part.