

It is an honour and a pleasure to speak here to you on behalf of CAOBISCO, Association of the biscuit and confectionery industries of the E.U., that represents 1.800 companies, 257.000 employees, more than 44 billion € of annual turnover, a total production of 11 million tonnes of products (chocolate, biscuits, sweets, etc.), 30 % of the European production of sugar, 35 % of skimmed milk powder at full EU price, and 50 % of the world production of cocoa beans.

We are active members of the C.I.A.A., the Confederation of food and drink industries of the E.U., and we represent there one of the main second processing sectors, so contributing not only to the transformation of E.U. agricultural products, but also to the creation of an increased value added and of jobs inside the E.U.

Our exports (C.N. codes 17.04, 18.06 and 19.05) outside EU-27 account for 3.2 billion €, i.e. 7 % of the total value of food exports from E.U., and 10 % of the volume produced in this biscuit and confectionery sector. The two last enlargements of the E.U. have contributed to the increase of the E.U. internal trade, but not to the increase of exports outside E.U., even if in some cases there was some flow between the members of the old C.E.F.T.A. In any case, our EU-27 exports are increasing only very slowly in the last years, mainly due to competition from industries located in non E.U. countries. And we want to increase our share in the world market.

To achieve this objective, we urgently need 4 measures:

1. Market access:

- Reduction of the tariffs applied to our products in non EU markets.
- Agreement in the Doha Development Agenda negotiations.
- Alternatively, bilateral agreements with other countries.
- We welcome the efforts that E.C. is making in this area. We would like to see soon concrete results.

2. Competitive costs of our raw materials:

- Export refunds now cover the gap between E.U. prices and world market prices.
- But they will be phased out sooner or later.
- To replace them, we need a reduction of E.U. prices of agricultural products (mainly, milk and sugar).
- Alternatively, or perhaps complementary, a substantial reform of the Inward Processing Relief regime.
- We recognise the efforts that the E.C. is making in these areas. They should be increased and effective.

3. Trade facilitation:

- Non tariff barriers constitute very often a big obstacle to the development of exports.
- Certificates, documents, delays, other measures not already justified, should be reviewed.
- Single window/one-time submission and co-operation between Customs Administrations, etc., are needed.
- Simplification of rules of origin (revision of provisions in bilateral agreements, such as in E.U.-Macedonia).
- We welcome the efforts that W.T.O. and E.C. are making in this area. We have to see soon concrete results and improvements.

4. Export promotion:

- All of you recognise the quality of the E.U. confectionery products.
- But it has to be also communicated to the consumers of non E.U. countries.
- Through effective and continued programmes.
- We would like that the revision of the E.U. promotion policies (internal and external) include our products.

I'm sure that, with these 4 measures in place, the biscuit and confectionery industries of the E.U. will succeed in the foreign markets, will use a bigger amount of E.U. agricultural raw materials, will create more stable jobs in the E.U. and will contribute to a major G.D.P. in the E.U.

Thank you very much for your attention, and enjoy the rest of the event.