

New Fertilizer Regulation – acceptable compromise but challenges remain

Brussels, 20 November 2018: European mineral fertilizer industry broadly welcomes the compromise agreement in the trilogue on the new Fertilizer Regulation. The agreement represents a balance between setting ambitious standards and retaining fertilizer industry's ability to continue supplying European farmers. We however regret that the level of nutrients in mineral fertilizers was reduced as we want to offer quality products.

Jacob Hansen, Director General of Fertilizers Europe commented "Fertilizers Europe would like to congratulate the Rapporteurs MEP Mihai Țurcanu (EPP, Romania) and MEP Elisabetta Gardini (EPP, Italy), as well as the shadow rapporteurs and the Austrian Presidency of the EU for concluding an agreement on the new fertilizer regulation." He added "We broadly welcome this agreement as it represents a balance, which allows the mineral fertilizer industry to move forward in supplying quality fertilizer products to European farmers."

Fertilizers Europe particularly welcomes the inclusion of industry by-products in the scope of the regulation without creating disproportionate bureaucracy for the placing of mineral fertilizers on the Single Market. "We are and we want to continue to be the leading sector of industrial symbiosis and recycling in Europe", said Jacob Hansen. "The original proposal did not allow this, therefore I want to thank Members of the European Parliament, Member States and also the EU Commission for helping to find a solution to this key issue."

As part of the agreement, a limit of 60 mg/kg P₂O₅ on the cadmium content in phosphorus fertilizers will be set. This limit will be implemented immediately after the application of the Regulation. Citing scientific support, the industry has maintained that a cadmium limit should not be below 60 mg/kg P₂O₅ but could be higher. "Given that the outcome sets a limit of 60 mg/kg P₂O₅, I would have expected the limit to only take effect after an appropriate transition period allowing EU producers to adapt their sourcing practices and their production processes", commented Jacob Hansen. "The immediate implementation of this limit creates a challenge for the European phosphate industry."

Fertilizers Europe also acknowledges the opening of the CE mark to other fertilizing products such as organic fertilizers or biostimulants. "We only regret that this opening came at the expense of the quality of mineral fertilizers. The minimum nutrient levels are very low and this is a drawback for European agriculture. EU farmers rely on efficient mineral fertilizers to boost their yields and the quality of their crops", Jacob Hansen added.

Provided that this deal is adopted by the European Parliament and the Council, EU mineral fertilizer producers count on the European Commission to develop swiftly a guidance document in order to facilitate the transition to the new complex rules.

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About Fertilizers Europe

Fertilizers Europe represents the majority of fertilizer producers in Europe and is recognized as the dedicated industry source of information on mineral fertilizers. The Association communicates with a wide variety of institutions, legislators, stakeholders and members of the public who seek information on fertilizer technology and topics relating to today's agricultural, environmental and economic challenges.