

To: Mr. Christophe Hansen
European Commissioner for Agriculture and Food
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

Brussels, 2 December 2024

Dear Commissioner Hansen,

On behalf of CropLife Europe, I extend my warm congratulations on your appointment to the College of Commissioners. Today's agricultural sector faces significant challenges and opportunities, as highlighted in the Draghi report and the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture. These call for both a visionary approach and a robust framework and we look forward to collaborating as partners in building resilient, sustainable and innovative food systems for Europe.

As the European organisation representing the crop protection sector, we advocate for an innovation-driven and outcome-focused approach that leverages a full toolbox of complementary solutions for farmers. Our members are 25 global companies, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and 32 national associations driven by innovation and operating in conventional pesticides, biopesticides, plant biotechnology, and digital and precision agriculture.

The European Union stands at a critical moment for the agricultural sector, and we are eager to constructively contribute to shaping its future by playing an active role as a member of the European Board on Agri-Food (EBAF). Farmers across Europe face complex challenges that require innovative, complementary tools and frameworks to secure a competitive and sustainable agri-food sector. To that end, I have written to President von der Leyen to formally express our strong interest in joining EBAF (or a similar platform) as a member, where we can bring our expertise to the table - please see the attached.

Our mission aligns with the core recommendations of the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture, particularly the focus on fostering innovation to ensure a sustainable and resilient food system. Through collaboration with the European Commission, including membership in the European Board on Agri-Food (EBAF), we are confident that our expertise and resources can drive meaningful progress toward Europe's goals to advance sustainability, innovation, and security in Agriculture.

Also, I would like to take the opportunity of this letter to highlight the work on our 2030 Commitments launched in 2021. These commitments focus on three main priorities: fostering Innovation and Investment, advancing the Circular Economy, and protecting People and the Environment.

This year, we are proud to share substantial progress across these areas, demonstrating our alignment with the Green Deal ambitions and the Farm to Fork Strategy:

Innovation & Investment

Our members committed to investing €10 billion in Digital and Precision Agricultural technologies and €4 billion in biopesticides by 2030. We have made substantial progress, with €3.8 billion allocated to digital agronomy and €2.4 billion to biopesticides. This demonstrates 38% and 60% of our respective targets. Your emphasis on adapting the regulatory pathways for biopesticides resonates strongly with our ongoing work in this area and we look forward to supporting this vision.

Circular Economy

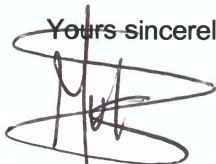
Our dedication to resource efficiency is central to our packaging recovery and recycling efforts. In 2023, we achieved a 71.8% collection rate for plastic packaging, demonstrating our commitment to sustainability. Looking ahead, we have set an ambitious target of reaching a 75% collection rate across all EU countries by 2025. Notably, 89% of the collected plastic was successfully processed for recycling, underscoring our focus on turning waste into valuable resources.

Protecting People & the Environment

We have reached 69% of our goal to train 1 million advisors, trainers, and farmers in best management practices. Additionally, we are on track to make Closed Transfer Systems available to all European farmers and operators by 2030, significantly reducing exposure risks during product handling.

Once again, congratulations on your appointment. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your team in the future to explore opportunities for collaboration and share insights into how our sector can support the vision for the future of EU agriculture.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "O. de Matos", written over a vertical line.

Olivier de Matos
Director General

Cc.

Wolfgang Burtscher, Director-General, DG Agriculture
Mihail Dumitru, Deputy Director-General, DG Agriculture
Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle, Director, DG Agriculture