

Press Release



European Bioethanol Producers welcome balanced European Commission and European Parliament re- ports on food prices

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Brussels, 29 May 2008: The European Bioethanol Fuel Association (eBIO) welcomes two recent communications of the European Commission and the European Parliament which both adopt a balanced and informed position on the impact of biofuel production on rising food prices.

Both the “European Commission Communication setting out potential policy responses to mitigate the effects of rising food prices” of 20 May and the “European Parliament Resolution of 22 May on rising food prices in the EU and the developing countries” acknowledge that the increase in staple food commodities or food prices has multiple causes.

This logical conclusion rejects the convenient theory that has been widely propagated in the media and certain industry circles of late – namely that biofuels are the sole cause of global food price increase. Both reports recognize that biofuel production cannot be held responsible for price rises in staple food commodities or food prices in the last 18 months. The European Parliament Resolution “emphasizes in the strongest possible terms that only 2–3% of EU agricultural land is currently being used for this kind of production, and media reports blaming biofuels for the current food crisis are exaggerated as far as the EU is concerned.”

“These reports inject a much needed dose of realism into the debate. Attempts to make biofuels the scapegoat for current food prices are both inaccurate and irresponsible. They have led to a risk of the existing and strong future benefits of biofuels being discarded in a wave of populist coverage”, said Rob Vierhout, Secretary General, eBIO.

Biofuels have a major role to play both in improving energy security and tackling climate change. As the European Commission notes, “in

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the transport sector today, the only alternative to non-sustainable fossil fuel is biofuel”.

Biofuels also present an opportunity for rural areas to break the cycle of poverty both in the developed and developing world. They can also help developing countries to become less dependent on fossil fuel imports.

European bioethanol producers wholeheartedly support the European Commission’s assertion that the 10% target for renewables in transport should be subject to strict conditions, including a workable and robust sustainability scheme and commercial viability for second generation biofuels.

“The industry is committed to ensuring that bioethanol is produced to highest sustainable standards and sees no alternative to doing otherwise if the sector is to continue to develop, “said Mr. Vierhout. “If produced in a sustainable manner biofuels will be able to provide society with fuel, feed and food, contributing overall benefits that will not be achievable if targets are shelved due to exaggerated claims and vested interests.”

eBIO is a non-profit European industry association under Belgium law. It is fostering bioethanol fuel production and use in the EU as well as advocating the proper legal and regulatory framework. eBIO was Founded in May 2005 and has 52 members.

eBIO is member of the European Renewable Energy Council (EREC).

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