



## **FINAL STATEMENT**

### **10<sup>th</sup> WORLD SUGAR CONFERENCE**

1. The World Association of Beet and Cane Growers (WABCG) held its 10<sup>th</sup> World Sugar Conference in Cambridge, UK, from 19 to 21 July 2010. With Alf Cristaudo (President of WABCG) in the chair, the Conference was attended by 150 delegates representing more than 20 countries and 3 international organisations.
2. The Conference would like to express its sincere thanks to the NFU Sugar for its hospitality, the organisation of well-chosen and particularly interesting technical visits, and the excellent working conditions and support provided throughout the Conference.
3. The WABCG is also very grateful to all the speakers who made this 10<sup>th</sup> World Sugar Conference a very valuable and successful event.
4. The 10<sup>th</sup> World Sugar Conference dealt with 7 main themes:
  - the world sugar and ethanol economy, trends and outlook
  - contract conditions
  - international trade negotiations and regional/national sugar policies
  - climate change and agriculture's response to this emerging challenge
  - research and technical developments for both sugarbeet and sugarcane crops
  - sustainability
  - promotion health and consumption

#### **World sugar and ethanol economy, trends and outlook**

5. After a second consecutive world sugar deficit in 2009/10, mainly due to a disappointing crop in Brazil and to an Indian production swing of nearly 10 Mt from 2007/08 to 2009/10, the Conference has noted an increase of average world sugar prices during the 2009/2010 campaign despite strong volatility. On medium term, WABCG growers consider:
  - the sugar market to settle in the range of 13-17 cts/lb for raw sugar,
  - production swings to contribute to maintaining a high volatility of world sugar prices.
6. In this context, growers' income stability is a key element. The WABCG therefore seeks management tools to provide this stability.
7. On the ethanol market, the Conference has observed:
  - a decreased influence of Brazilian exports and rising domestic demand in Brazil,
  - an increase of US ethanol exports bound for the EU market in 2009/10,
  - an increased production on the European market in the frame of the Renewable Energy Directive, fixing a target of 10% incorporation of renewable energy in transportation by 2020.



### **Contract conditions**

8. The Conference has noted that despite different contractual practices, growers share a common objective to balance beet and cane profitability for growers together with processors' profitability. WABCG consequently is seeking access to management tools to guarantee this profitability's balance, thereby creating more opportunities for "win-win" conditions in the sugar sector.

### **International trade negotiations and regional/national sugar policies**

9. The Conference has noted the difficulties encountered in the Doha Round negotiations and is worried that this leads to an increased number of bilateral agreements to the detriment of multilateral agreements.

10. The positions of the producer groups on the options for global policy reform showed their diversity during the Conference. However, all growers seek international trade rules in WTO that are balanced and equitable, and that lead to benefits that reach the farmers.

In this respect, the Conference reiterates its demand for national representative organisations, members of WABCG, to be consulted during the different stages of negotiations so that the specific character of beet and cane farming can be taken into account.

### **Climate change and agriculture's response to this emerging challenge**

11. With growing concern over environmental issues especially in terms of climate change, the Conference has highlighted the central role to be played by growers and more generally agriculture in this new context. Positive externalities generated by agriculture and growers to reduce GHG emissions have to be economically considered as a key point to be taken into account in future international and national negotiations on climate change.

12. Moreover, the issue of renewable energy has become crucial from a political and economic point of view. Whereas the experts agree that there are limited reserves of oil, and that oil as a non-renewable source of energy has a negative impact through global warming, the Conference was able to emphasize the responses provided by bio-fuels to these problems. It expressed satisfaction with the increase of world ethanol production, both in developed and developing countries. However, Beet and Cane growers encourage governments to increase their commitment to renewable energy.



### **Research and technical developments for both sugarbeet and sugarcane crops**

13. The examination of the present situation on research and technical developments drew attention to the crucial importance of developing new technologies to improve productivity together with a better protection of the environment. Innovations such as GMOs, biogas production, tropical beets or innovations in sugarcane plantings are therefore supported by growers.

### **Sustainability**

14. The Conference emphasized the importance of the protection of the environment for growers, for whom the land is their most important asset. It furthermore underlined the progress that has already been made over the last decade, notably in reducing the per hectare consumption of inputs (fertilizers and plant protection products), in reducing the use of burning for harvesting cane and in implementing “good farming practices” as part of both respect for the environment and sustainable development.

### **Promotion health and consumption**

15. The Conference has stressed that according to scientific studies, sugar does not cause obesity and it does not contribute to lifestyle diseases such as coronary heart disease, diabetes or cancer.

Growers would like to highlight that eating a healthy, balanced diet along with taking regular exercise is key to physical and mental wellbeing.

WABCG would like to welcome The Romanian Sugarbeet Growers Federation as a new WABCG Member. WABCG continues to seek and encourage new memberships.

WABCG will draw the attention of the public authorities and international organizations to the results of the 10<sup>th</sup> World Sugar Farmers Conference, expressing the hopes, difficulties and the progress made by beet and cane growers.

In adopting this final declaration, representatives of beet and cane growers throughout the world reaffirm their determination to continue to promote beet and cane production within the framework of economic, social and environmental progress and, as members of WABCG, reaffirm their solidarity with their colleagues throughout the world.