

## PRESS RELEASE

### The main European hazelnut players create "Group Corylus Europae".

After several online meetings and a face-to face meeting in Piedmont in November, Producer Organisations and research centres representing the 3 main hazelnut producing countries in Europe (Italy, France and Spain) decided to create the Group Corylus Europae.

The group represents almost 80% of European hazelnut production and has set itself the following goals

- To be a **network for the exchange of information** on all matters concerning the European hazelnut;
- To set up **joint actions**, in particular with the European Union in favour of the hazelnut production sector in Europe;
- To build together a **common identity** and promote a **sustainable and quality European hazelnut production**.

**The aim of such an initiative is to guarantee our food sovereignty and no longer depend on imports for 80% of the European market.** When Europe produces between 50 and 150,000 tonnes of hazelnuts, it imports 500,000 tonnes each year, mainly from Turkey. This objective can be achieved while developing a sustainable and quality production of hazelnuts, perfectly traced, healthy, safe and respectful of the environment.

In a letter addressed to the European Commission, the Corylus Europae Group warns of the main difficulties encountered by the European sector with protection against pests (balanin and Asian bugs in particular).

Concrete proposals are made and the Group calls on the Commission and the Member States :

- **To work in a coordinated way**, promoting and facilitating procedures for mutual recognition of authorised products between France, Italy and Spain.
- **Promote minor use processes and accelerate exceptional authorisations** where necessary.
- **To approve a specific programme of research**, field trials and transfer, both of alternative control systems for the main pests and diseases of the crop, as well as alternative systems or plant protection products for the control of new organisms. In this sense, the group recalls that the European Commission committed itself, during the annual bilateral meeting with Turkey on the hazelnut market on 30 September 2021, to promote a joint EU-Turkey research plan with the objective of sharing lines of research and information on new pests, especially for the control of *Halyomorpha halys*.

The **effects of climate change** (drought and heat stress, increased pests, tree imbalance, etc.) also threaten European hazelnut production.

Finally, in its letter the group underlines that European hazelnut production, which has one of the best levels in the world from the point of view of health and the environment, is also one of the most fragile.

The Corylus Europae Group will meet several times a year to discuss common issues in the European hazelnut sector. The Assembly of European Horticultural Regions (AREFLH) is in charge of its coordination.

# GROUP CORYLUS EUROPAE

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