



European Algae Biomass Association (EABA)
International Platform of Insects for Food &
Feed (IPIFF)
Confederation of European Yeast Producers
(COFALEC)

Attention: Commissioner Phil Hogan
Commissioner for Agriculture & Rural Development
Member of the European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 BRUSSELS

Brussels, 20 November 2018

Subject: contribution of 'new' protein sources to a successful European Protein Plan: joint recommendations from EABA, IPIFF and COFALEC associations

Dear Commissioner,

The European Commission report on the development of 'Plant Proteins in the European Union' is due for publication by the end of the year. As umbrella organisations representing the algae, yeast and insect producing sectors in Europe, we welcome the opportunity to contribute to the ongoing debates on the establishment of an EU-wide Protein Plan.

'New' protein sources, such as algae, yeast or insect derived products can bring promising and reliable solutions to European consumers and farmers, while recording satisfactory sustainability credentials:

- these materials can contribute to satisfy the nutritional needs of certain animal species or ages in a more efficient way than conventional vegetal sources;
- those products may also contribute to improve animals' zootechnical performance and/or health status;
- Particularly rich in protein and other essential nutritional characteristics (e.g. essential amino acids, fatty acids including omega 3 and omega 6, vitamins), those products also have a well-balanced nutrient profile to respond to human's dietary needs.

Moreover, these products should be regarded as reliable **complementary sources** - i.e. 'non-competing sources' - notably as they can reduce the potential nutrient deficiencies and better balance the amino acid profiles in animal feed formula, or be used in combination with other protein-based products in consumers' diets.

Finally, although these products only represent a minor proportion of the current EU protein supply, European markets for 'new' or 'alternative' sources of proteins are forecasted to grow very rapidly in the next few years¹. We are therefore convinced that **these new protein sources have the potential to offer viable and reliable solutions to address the 'EU protein gap' challenge in the very near future.**

Against this background, the EU organisations representing these emerging industries have decided to join forces and have agreed on a set of recommendations for a successful EU Protein Plan. These recommendations are outlined below.

¹ According to recent Rabobank study (2017), the current size of the market for alternative proteins products is of 130,000 tonnes for the EU (year 2016). The total EU market for alternative protein sources could reach a level between 320,000 and 390,000 tonnes in 2022.

1. First of all, we believe that a successful EU Protein Plan should look beyond vegetal based and 'conventional' protein sources: we are indeed pleading for an **'inclusive' approach**, whereby combinations between vegetal and animal-based products as well as between 'new' and conventional sources can be fully explored.

In order to help industries to maximise the potential of these new protein sources, we also firmly believe that **increased investments in infrastructures** (e.g. biorefinery and processing technologies) and **R&D activities** (e.g. optimization of production conditions) are **necessary**: such efforts are indeed needed so as to close the 'knowledge gaps' or barriers to the upscaling and/or uptake of these new solutions (e.g. through research on the nutritional value of the products, on the development of process technologies or on the improvement of those sectors' environmental performance) and therefore better valorise these new sources of proteins.

2. To this end, we consider necessary to foresee appropriate **support measures** in the framework of **EU Research and Development projects** (e.g. Research and innovation Programmes under Horizon 2020, FP 9, Food 2030 or Rural Development funds) or **through tenders targeted at EU industry associations**. While those channels can be useful to increase the production capacity of those actors (see above), these can also serve as instruments to pool all necessary evidence or documentation in support of required EU authorisation processes (e.g. novel food authorisations) or to expand opportunities for cross sectorial collaborations (such collaborations contributing to exploit all possible synergies existing between these different protein sources and foster their development).

3. Other EU support mechanisms such as **the European Investment Funds** (e.g. through direct & indirect equity, grants, loans, guarantees...) or the **European Investment bank** also constitute appropriate channels to finance wide scale projects which can further boost the growth of those sectors.

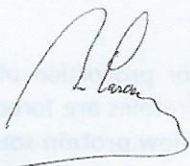
4. Finally, we are calling for the launching of **EU wide information campaigns**, to promote the benefits of eating a variety of protein sources for EU consumers, while **raising awareness** on the existence and advantages of **new sources of proteins**.

We would like to thank you for the attention you may give to the recommendations contained in the present letter and we remain at your disposal should you require clarifications in this respect. Please be informed that the same letter has been addressed to the EU Commissioner Carlos Moedas as well as to the Austrian Federal Minister for Sustainability and Tourism, Ms Elizbeth Köstinger.

Yours sincerely,

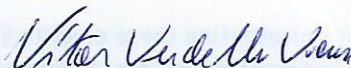
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