

LETTER(26)00790:1 – PPA/jg

Ms Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission
Rue de la Loi, 200
BE - 1049 Brussels

Brussels, 8 April 2026

Subject: Middle East conflict – Implications for EU agriculture and need for an urgent exceptional EU coordinated response

Dear President von der Leyen,

Four weeks after the escalation of the conflict in the Middle East, the impact on EU agriculture is already severe and rapidly intensifying.

European farmers and agri-cooperatives are once again facing external shocks that directly disrupt production and increase costs, threatening agriculture markets and farm viability. This comes on top of an already fragile situation for fertiliser prices, which have been on an upward trend since the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In January and February 2026 alone, prices increased due to the implementation of CBAM by 20–25% compared to their November 2025 levels, with urea rising from below €500 per tonne to €570–600 per tonne. With the war in Iran, the situation has since worsened significantly, with urea prices now reaching more than €700 per tonne and continuing to increase. In all Member States, fertilisers are being sold at prohibitive prices of up to €800 per tonne.

Farmers' margins are already tight due to a persistent downturn in EU arable crop markets; they are now facing an impossible situation. At a crucial moment in the agricultural season, many do not know how they will be able to secure the fertilisers they still need, while they are already applying input minimisation strategies or planting less. This directly threatens agricultural output, food security and affordability across the Union, with key analysts warning against a looming 'food shock' which will impact particularly vulnerable consumers¹.

Even in the event of a rapid de-escalation, these effects will persist for months and particularly during the upcoming sowing period.

Feedback from Copa and Cogeca members across the EU highlights four urgent concerns:

- **Fertiliser affordability and availability:** A full-scale fertiliser crisis has already arrived. Fertilisers represent up to 30% of input costs in specialised crop farms. Delayed purchases are increasing, which puts future yields at risk.
- **Diesel costs:** Increases of up to 100% have been reported across Member States, directly affecting ongoing agricultural operations.

¹ <https://www.euractiv.com/interview/interview-fao-chief-economist-warns-of-looming-food-shock-if-middle-east-war-drags-on/>



- **Energy prices:** Rising costs are impacting all sectors, from production in greenhouses to feed and food processing, while uncertainty is constraining investment.
- **Supply chain pressures:** From packaging materials (glass, plastic, paper) which have also become more expensive, together with transport and logistics services being both more costly and less available.

With two major conflicts affecting Europe's neighbourhood, **there is a clear need for an urgent strong, coordinated European response at the level of Covid-19 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine** that aims to safeguard food production, ensures food and energy security and preserves the functioning of the Single Market. Exceptional situations call for exceptional measures.

As such, we call on the European Commission to urgently act by underpinning the strategic importance of agriculture and forestry sectors, central to Europe's food security, energy resilience and economic stability, through concrete immediate action on the following priorities:

1. **Ensuring fertiliser availability and affordability**, building on Copa-Cogeca's proposed Fertiliser Action Plan including immediate, medium- and long-term measures to stabilise the market. Measures to alleviate the situation need to be taken immediately.
2. **Providing targeted support to farms and agri-cooperatives liquidity**, making use of all available EU instruments to address exceptional cost increases.
3. **Continuing and accelerating simplification with the Omnibus to bring relief on the ground.** EU Institutions must go further by modernising legislation that currently discourages innovation, slows down permitting, and limits circularity.
4. **Ensuring certainty on the sector's access to energy by securing energy availabilities and gas at reasonable prices.** Prioritise all operators in the agri-food supply chain in case of gas rationing or energy reduction. Additionally, there is a need to diversify and boost energy supply with the key role of bioenergy/crop biofuels/biomethane, biogas and the potential of decentralized on-farm renewable energy.

We expect the EU to make available all existing tools to support farmers and EU agri-cooperatives to ensure that European farming production continues in the short and medium term without disruptions.

Reducing strategic dependencies and reinforcing competitiveness in agriculture and the agri-food sector are essential foundations for a truly resilient Europe.

Copa and Cogeca stand ready to support EU institutions with detailed analysis and concrete solutions.

Yours sincerely,



Massimiliano Giansanti
Copa President



Lennart Nilsson
Cogeca President

