

Bi-annual newsletter from the European Association of Fruit & Vegetable Processors

Editorial

During the past years, PROFEL has reinforced its actions to have a real impact at European level, particularly for trade, origin labelling, specialty crops and promotion. PROFEL is actively engaging with the European Commission, members of the European Parliament and other decision-making bodies and stakeholders in Brussels. The decisions taken at European level have a real impact in all our countries, where our consumers, our clients our industries, and our suppliers are located. Our mission is to defend our interests, to limit the burden of excessive regulations and to ensure a free flow of goods within the European market. Moreover, we have to strike balanced international agreements in the globalized market and to demonstrate that we are responsible producers, striving to limit the impact on the environment and fighting against food waste, which was the topic of our conference in April 2015.

After four year as PROFEL president, I am confident that Mr. Mayntz, representing the fruit sector, will continue to work on these important subjects, with the support of an efficient team in Brussels.

Jean-Bernard Bonduelle

Processed Vegetables: The ultimate solution to food waste?

PROFEL's 9th Processed Vegetables Conference took place on Thursday 23 April 2015 in Brussels. The event brought together policymakers, researchers and industry representatives to discuss how food preservation methods such as freezing and canning are key in the battle to reduce food waste. High-level speakers from amongst others the FAO, European Commission and UK House of Lords presented their views at this occasion.

Researchers and sector representatives showcased concrete examples of how canned and frozen vegetables help Europeans reduce their spiralling levels of food waste in the home: extended shelf-life and convenient portion control are just two examples.



PROFEL President, Mr Bonduelle opening the PROFEL Conference

With 115 participants, the event was well attended, both by the industry and policymakers.



115 participants from 8 different countries attended the PROFEL Conference

The outcome of the Conference was the request to opinion formers, policy makers and partners in the supply chain to support the 'easy wins' that the preserved vegetable sector can deliver in the battle to reduce food waste; given that the power of preservation appeared to have been overlooked in the search for food waste solutions.

PROFEL issued a press release after the event (available [here](#)) which has received good media attention, with publication in at least 7 specialised press magazines.

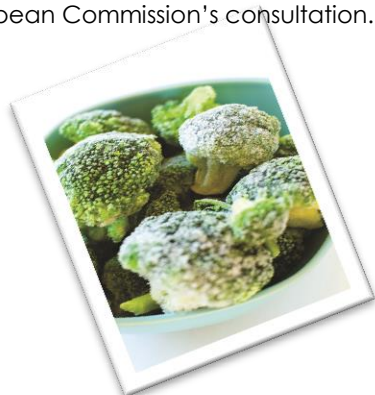
European Parliament

PROFEL continues to raise the profile of processed fruit and vegetables in the European Parliament. Prior to the EP's AGRI Committee vote on its own-initiative report on the **F&V sector since the 2007 Reform**, PROFEL had the opportunity to meet with the assistant of the rapporteur **MEP Mr Melo** (PT-EPP). (NS/15/004).

The coming weeks PROFEL will meet with **MEP Mr Dantin** to exchange on developments regarding minor uses, and with the assistant of **MEP Mr Lange** (Rapporteur INTA Committee for TTIP) to explain the sector's position on the trade negotiations with the USA.

A meeting is also scheduled with **MEP Ms Melior**, to present the sector and the outcome of the PROFEL Conference on Food Waste.

The European Parliament continues its work for the reform of the European **School Fruit Scheme**. PROFEL informed MEPs again on the importance to keep processed fruit and vegetables under the full scope of the Regulation ahead of the vote in the AGRI Committee. In the meantime the European Commission is making an evaluation of the functioning of the scheme and of the need to keep the framework at EU level. PROFEL has contributed to the European Commission's consultation.



Trade update

On the 4th of February PROFEL participated in a stakeholder event organised by the European Commission on the negotiations for a free trade agreement with the **United States (TTIP)**. An overview of the offensive and defensive interests of the European processed fruit and vegetables sector have been presented to policy-makers (Trade/15/002). PROFEL's presentation received good attention from EC officials and has been the starting point for more detailed exchanges on the topic.

On the 11th of March **Ecuador** announced a general safeguard tariff measure, leading to a tariff surcharge of 5% to 45% for a period of 15 months on a wide range of goods, affecting a variety of processed fruit and vegetables. The measures are taken to address a general imbalance in Ecuador's balance-of-payments. PROFEL has informed EC experts on the consequences for the exports of PROFEL sectors products. The WTO is evaluating the measures and the EC is preparing its position internally. More information should be available during summer.

Promotion

PROFEL's Promotion Working Group continues to meet to prepare the application for an **EU-funded promotion campaign for processed vegetables** early 2016. Under the new Regulation multi-country campaigns can receive up to 80% co-financing from the European Union for the promotion of EU agricultural products. France, Spain, The Netherlands and Hungary are discussing the possibilities for a campaign to promote canned and frozen vegetables including

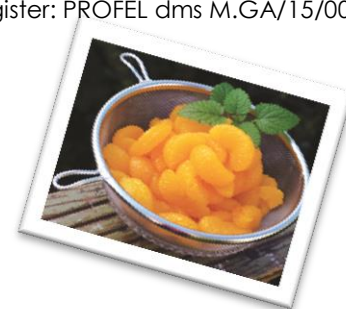
sweet corn, the first time that this product is also eligible under the Promotion Regulation. The next meeting of the Working Group will take place on the 11th of June, at the occasion of the PROFEL General Assembly.

Future of PROFEL

On the 24th of April members of the Executive Committee and National Secretaries discussed together the functioning of PROFEL and identified the priorities for the sector the coming year. This strategy session has been facilitated by Mrs Maria-Teresa Scardigli, Vice-President of KELLEN, the company providing the association management services to PROFEL. A refreshing of PROFEL's mission, some improvements to the current structure and the creation of a Communication Working Group have been suggested. The renewed Strategic Agenda will be presented to the General Assembly on 12 June.

General Assembly

PROFEL's General Assmebly will take place on 11 and 12 June 2015 in Hotel Bedford in Paris, organized this year by our French member FIAC/Adepale. The Fruit meetings and the Promotion Working Group will meet on 11 June in the morning; the Executive Committee will take place on the 11th in the afternoon. The General Assembly will be held on 12 June in the morning. To register: PROFEL dms M.GA/15/002.



TLC update

Drained net weight

According to the Food Information to Consumers Regulation, if the food has been glazed, the declared net weight of the food has to be exclusive of the glaze. In February 2015, PROFEL started its collaboration with the French research institutes CTCPA and PFI Nouvelles Vagues to establish a robust methodology to determine drained net weight. The first results of the tests, prioritizing broccoli, to be followed by ring tests performed by the companies, are expected for early summer 2015.

Bisphenol A

On the 1st of January 2015 the French law banning BPA has entered into force. In January 2015, the EFSA scientific opinion on BPA has been published, concluding that there are no risks at current levels of exposure while the TDI has been reduced from 50 µg/kg of bw/day to 4 µg/kg of bw/day (TLC.Cont/15/003).

FoodDrinkEurope has urged the European Commission to react against the French ban.

Labelling of Origin

Following the finalization of the consultant's study on mandatory indication of origin for unprocessed products, single ingredients and ingredients representing more than 50% of a food, the European Commission has published on the 20th of May the report to the European Parliament and the Council, originally due by the 13th of December 2014 (TLC.lab/15/09). The report confirms the high consumers' interest in COOL, but also acknowledges the increased burden and costs for food business operators, which would lead to higher prices for consumers. Mandatory origin labelling at country level would risk affecting the internal market. The political recommendation stemming from the report is that voluntary origin labelling, combined with already existing mandatory original labelling rules for specific foods, is the most suitable option to address the consumers' interest in origin information, while avoiding additional burdens on the industry and any distortion of the internal market.

Prior to the publication of the report, Member states discussed the topic at the Council meeting on the 20th of April and further discussions are foreseen in the coming months.

Lead:

In February 2015, the Standing Committee approved revised levels for lead (TLC.Cont/15/05). The regulation is scheduled to be published in summer 2015.

Chlorate: In Spring PROFEL requested temporary enforcement levels to facilitate EU trade. Following discussions between Member States at the Standing Committee in September, PROFEL has prepared an overview of the information available per country. PROFEL has contributed to the EFSA data collection - EFSA is expected to deliver its opinion in summer 2015 and then discussions at European level are expected to be resumed.

Minor Uses

Following the publication of the European Commission's report on funding for minor uses in February 2015, the Coordination platform, founded both by the European Commission and by some member states (the Netherlands, France, Belgium and Germany) based in Paris, is scheduled to be in place in summer 2015. The Agri-Food Chain Round Table for Pesticide Products is planning an event on this topic in the European Parliament on 23 June 2015.

PROFEL Meeting Calendar

Promotion Working Group: 11 June 2015 – 10h00 – Paris

Deciduous Fruit Meeting: 11 June 2015 – 9h00 – Paris

Joint Fruit Meeting: 11 June 2015 – 10h30 – Paris

Fruit Preserves Meeting: 11 June 2015 – 12h30 – Paris

Executive Committee: 11 June 2015 – 14h00 – Paris

PROFEL General Assembly: 12 June 2012 – 9h00 – Paris

TLC Meeting: 16 October 2015 – am – Brussels

Canned and Frozen Vegetables: 16 October – pm Brussels

Dried Vegetables meeting: 2 December 2015 – 18h30 – Paris (Food Ingredients Europe)