



**POTRAVINÁŘSKÁ
KOMORA
ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY**

Dear MEPs
European Parliament
Allée du Printemps
B.P. 1024 F-67070 - Strasbourg

Prague 16 October 2024

Open Letter on the draft EU Anti-Deforestation Regulation 2023/1115

Dear MEPs,

As the largest Czech organization representing food producers, we would like to address you with this open letter regarding the EU draft regulation against deforestation which the European Commission has proposed to defer for a year, among others, after pressure from the European food producers. In the coming weeks, this item is going to be on the agenda of the European Parliament and you are going to vote on its possible deferment.

Following the exchange of information with hundreds of companies over the past months, we have learned that putting the Regulation into practice poses a significant challenge for businesses as the necessary pan-European IT system has not been created yet, nor have the necessary implementing regulations been issued. The deferment of the regulation may mitigate the critical situation. The forthcoming regulation is not only of concern to the European food processors, but also to the producers in other sectors. **Therefore, we urge you to push for timely deferment of the effective date of the anti-deforestation regulation for which the European businesses have no real opportunity to administratively prepare.**

Otherwise, the situation may be critical already at the end of the year. There is a very real danger that the food producers will not be able to buy commodities from farmers and that chain stores will not buy food from the processors. For example, in the case of beef, under the current situation, each farmer who breeds cattle would have to provide an EU electronic certificate - containing the information on the geolocation of the place where the animal has been reared, as well as the information on the origin of the feed it has been fed with - for each bovine animal when transported to the slaughterhouse. Similarly, every producer and seller of coffee or chocolate would have to provide each product with a certificate that the production of these products has not caused deforestation anywhere in the world. This is completely unrealistic in the current state of the technical preparations.

Food producers are ready to contribute to efforts to reduce global deforestation. **However, all procedures must be practicable and must not disrupt the food supply in any way. Nor must they harm the competitiveness of the European**

business entities compared to those in the non-EU countries. Account must be taken of the need for small and medium-sized enterprises to be able to prepare for the new administrative obligations in good time and to be able to join the system in which they will generate due diligence certificates in good time and without difficulty.

If in doubt, you can check much of the information yourself with the food manufacturers in your home countries. We hope that you will help alleviate the concerns of many European businesses and take the opportunity to agree to the proposal to defer the anti-deforestation regulation. Failure to defer it could, among other things, cause extreme demand for certain commodities at the other end of the planet, which would inevitably increase the cost of food production. Such an action would ultimately be felt by every European consumer and, therefore, we are convinced that the proposal will receive your due attention in the current situation.

Yours sincerely,

Dana Večeřová

President of the Federation of the Food and Drink Industries of the Czech Republic