



European Award for Cooperative Innovation

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Cogeca is announcing a **European Award for Cooperative Innovation** aimed at recognising the most innovative cooperatives emerging from its member organisations in five different categories depending on their particular type of activity.

The award will be granted for the first time in 2009 while the second time will be in 2011 and following that, once every three years.

Objective of the award

Cogeca's role of promoting more favourable conditions for the development of cooperative organisations in the field of food and agriculture is undeniable.

Nevertheless, the wider socioeconomic environment is characterised by multifaceted challenges such as increasingly diversified consumer demand, intensified competition in the global market (enforced through market globalisation and trade liberalisation) as well as the imperative need to adapt agricultural, farming and processing practices to meet environmental sustainability. Thus, cooperatives in the European Union strive to respond to those challenges by introducing pioneering, technical, structural, organisational and system innovation, which effectively address the respective issues that innovations limit their development potential.

Cogeca is therefore introducing the **European Award for Cooperative Innovation as a tool for promoting breakthroughs for cooperative development, and stimulating further adoption of innovative practices amongst cooperatives.**

The fundamental objective of the award is to underline and encourage activities conducted with the aim of promoting new products and services offered by EU cooperatives, especially through innovation in the five categories/fields as defined in the award's regulations.

The award will seek to promote examples of best practice and encourage the qualitative development of these innovations for the benefit of the general public throughout the European Union.

Scope

Cogeca establishes the **award** as being open to participation from all cooperatives in the agricultural, forestry, agri-food and fisheries sectors, members of any of the full member organisations of Cogeca, be they automatically affiliated or

affiliated by admission.

Applications can be submitted by all levels and types of cooperatives in the agricultural, forestry, agri-food and fisheries sectors, having achieved or taken part in the development of cooperative innovation or having achieved or taken part in innovative initiatives in the above-mentioned sectors, in (at least) one of the twenty-seven Member States of the European Union.

The **award** will be granted for the following categories/fields:

- **Food processes:** development and/or improvement of environmentally-sustainable food production processes or development of products and/or processes adding value to primary production that contribute to human nutrition and human well being;
- **Non-food processes:** development and/or improvement of environmentally-sustainable non-food production processes;
- **Environment:** waste management, emission reduction, water treatment, or any other use of resources contributing to environmental protection;
- **Member service:** any activity that contributes towards improvement and innovation in relation to cooperative members;
- **Food Chain:** Internal or food chain level innovative organisational structure leading to a more efficient use of resources and/or improved performance.

The entry forms will be carefully considered under the following main headings: example of best practice, measurable concrete results, enhancement and continuity of actions carried out, sustainability etc, and according to the criteria below: the **European Award for Cooperative Innovation Prize** will be awarded to an exemplary facility that will show the best integration of the various characteristics that define cooperative innovation.

Nature of the award

The award-winning cooperative will receive a diploma and a trophy symbolising the objectives pursued by Cogeca. The prize-winner will benefit from the publicity and communication about the award which will be disseminated at EU level to publicise examples of best practice and 'know-how' in the field of cooperative innovation. The award-winning candidates will also have their projects appearing on the Copa-Cogeca website and Cogeca members' websites.

Decision and prize-giving of the award

The jury will meet between 11 and 29 May 2009, in Brussels, to select the award winners in the different categories/fields. The official **award** ceremony will take place in June 2009 in Brussels (date to be announced at a later stage, but linked to a meeting of the Cogeca Praesidia). The list of award-winners, in the different categories/fields, will be published on the Copa-Cogeca website and on AGRI INFO. Their achievements will be able to be viewed on the Copa-Cogeca website and on AGRI INFO.

The decision-making process

Role of the jury

The jury will be entrusted with deciding upon the prize-giving of the **award**, based on a selection of shortlisted candidates presented by the organising committee, in the five selected categories/fields which candidates are eligible to participate when competing for this **award**.

Composition

The jury will be composed of eleven (11) members; representatives of European institutions and qualified individuals who as a result of their roles, professions and experience in the fields of agriculture, cooperatives, enterprises and social policy and development, are competent in identifying exemplary achievements or initiatives in cooperative innovation throughout the EU. The Cogeca President will chair the jury.

Decision-making

The organising committee will verify that the applications submitted to the jury fully comply with the eligibility criteria. The organising committee reserves the right to verify, *in situ*, the achievements submitted by candidates. On the basis of a prior examination and selection made by the organising committee, the jury will analyse the shortlists and decide on how the **award** is going to be presented, acknowledging achievements in the five eligible categories/fields.

The application form

The application form will be available in electronic format, for downloading, on the Copa-Cogeca website (**www.Copa-cogeca.eu**).

To that end, all of the information concerning this award will be available through a link on the Copa-Cogeca website. The application forms will be available in the official languages of Copa-Cogeca.

Submission of applications

All application forms must be submitted by registered mail, by courier or by hand no later than 16 March 2009 to the Copa-Cogeca address (Rue de Trèves, 61 1040 Brussels, Belgium).

Results and prize-giving of the awards: appointing the prize-winners

The chair of the jury shall take charge of informing the prize-winners by 1 June 2009. They will be informed by a letter from Copa-Cogeca specifying the date and place of the distribution of the awards.

The official awards ceremony will take place in Brussels on the occasion of the June 2009 Cogeca Presidium meeting, during which the names of the winners will be read in the presence of the members of the jury and the organising committee as well as the authorities and the people involved in the **award**, who will be invited to accompany the prize-winners.

Communication and publicity of the award winners

The results of the **award** will be widely publicised. The information will be released at EU level by Copa-Cogeca and at Member State level by its members through any means of media coverage.

Relevant dates 2008–2009:

- Announcement of the creation of the **award**: October 1 2008 (Congress of European Farmers);
- Declaration of Intent: January 30, 2009;
- Submission of application forms: March 16, 2009;
- Listing and establishment of eligible applications: March 27 2009;
- Analysis, screening of application forms and drawing up of shortlists: April 2009;
- Jury analysis and decision: 11 to 29 May 2009;
- Communication of the jury's decision to prize-winners: June 1 2009;
- Presentation of the **award**: June 2009, Cogeca Praesidium meeting.

PRESENTATION OF COGECA:
THE VOICE OF EUROPEAN AGRI-COOPERATIVES

Cogeca (General Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives in the European Union) is the organisation which represents the vast majority of agricultural cooperatives in the European Union. It represents more than 40,000 cooperatives and has 35 member organisations from the EU Member States. Its aim is to defend the general interests of agriculture.

Cogeca
European Agri-Cooperatives

61, Rue de Trèves
B-1040 Brussels

Phone 00 32 (0) 2 287 27 11
Fax 00 32 (0) 2 287 27 00

www.Copa-Cogeca.eu