



Paris, March 24<sup>th</sup>,2020

President Von der Leyen  
European Commission  
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200  
B – 1040 Brussels  
Brussels

**Subject: Recognition of yeast as “essential products” which free circulation in the EU should be ensured in the context of the present Covid-19 crisis**

Dear President von der Leyen,

COFALEC is the confederation of yeast producers that represents the EU yeast industry in Europe. With 33 factories scattered through the European Union, one million tons of yeast produced each year and more than 30% of the production exported outside Europe, **the EU yeast industry is an important player of the European food industry.**

Yeast is a natural living micro-organism essential for the making of traditional emblematic fermented products (bread, wine, beer). But thanks to new developments, yeasts can also provide solutions to produce essential ingredients for pharmaceutical producers, support human and animal nutrition and health, plant health, new sources of plant-based proteins, new ferments and ingredients, and bio-ethanol production.

COFALEC members welcome the European Commission’s *Guidelines for border management measures to protect health and ensure the availability of goods and essential services.*

These guidelines are meant to set out the “*principles for an integrated approach to an effective border management to protect health while preserving the integrity of the Single Market*”.

Without compromising health protection, they should secure the free movements of goods within the EU in view of the Covid-19 measures taken by several EU Member States, namely, to restrict significantly access to their market including by partial closure of their borders.

As rightly mentioned in the EU Commission guidance document, there is no evidence that food is a source or a transmission source of Covid-19. The same applies in all logic to our yeast and yeast extract products.

We would like to emphasize that our products are essential to many emblematic food and drink products and notably to bread (“no yeast, no bread!”). As such, they should be considered as essential good as all food, thus allowing to secure their free circulation within the EU.

Indeed, the ability for bakers to have daily access to their needed raw materials to make bread is totally dependent on a fully functional food chain, including suppliers of flour, yeast and all other bread ingredients. It is also important to secure the free circulation of all the raw materials needed to produce our yeast products i.e. and above all molasses, but also ammonia, sulfuric acid and phosphoric acid and the dedicated packaging.



In addition, our products are also vital for the sourcing of essential ingredients for pharmaceutical producers, which are considered by many Member States as Operators of Vital Importance (OVI).

We would thus call upon the European Commission and Member States, whilst taking the proportionate measures to protect against Covid-19, **to confirm us that they indeed include our yeast and yeast products within the status of “essential good”**.

**This will allow to secure their free circulation in the EU together with their needed raw materials.**

We thank you very much in advance for taking our concerns into account.

Yours sincerely,

Diane DORE  
Secretary General

Marc CASIER  
President

**Copy:**

Commissioner for Internal Market, Thierry Breton  
Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Stella Kyriakides  
Commissioner for Agriculture, Janusz Wojciechowski  
Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson  
Commissioner for Crisis Management, Janez Lenarcic  
Commissioner for Trade, Phil Hogan  
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