

EU Agriculture & Rural Development Commissioner Dacian Ciolos addressed the Oxford Farming Conference this morning. Sharing a platform with Irish Farm Minister Simon Coveney and NFU President Peter Kendall he spoke freely, so there is no written speech, but here are quotes from his presentation:

"Agriculture is an international question - in terms of trade, food security, fighting world poverty, climate change and the management of natural resources."

"We need market orientation and sustainability (which is mostly not remunerated by the market) and responsibility to be taken by the main actors (private & public)."

"The EU provides strong potential for agricultural exports and has a very important role in setting standards and norms as a global leader."

"Biodiversity, soil fertility and water are all public goods. The maintenance of natural resources is of global interest, not just for farmers."

"EU quality, taste and tradition is a major asset when it comes to marketing our products around the world; EU norms on food safety and better sustainability are very important for increasing exports outside the EU."

"Agri-food exports (notably quality products rather than commodities) are vital for helping Europe emerge from economic crisis - as we're seeing in Ireland, Spain, Greece and Portugal."

"I have proposed to treble the budget for EU promotion in the coming years especially on non-EU markets; from my recent visits to China, Japan and South Korea, I gather that 'made in Europe' is a very useful message because it reflects food safety, environment and quality."

"CAP reform allows the UK flexibility and tools to address UK specificities and priorities without impacting on other Member States, but within the single market."

If you need more information then you can contact the Commissioner's Spokesman Roger Waite on 0032.498.961404

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