

PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD



Dear Members,

In my remarks at our last Congress in France, I referred to the many uncertainties, both present and emerging, facing the potato trade. Over the past season, the impact of these uncertainties has proven to be profound, affecting virtually every aspect of our business.

At a major joint event in late summer, one of our members coined the phrase: *"The potato industry will need a reset."* At the time, few could have anticipated how rapidly and fundamentally this reset would unfold, nor the scale of its consequences for our sector.

Global competition continues to intensify. Protectionist measures, geopolitical tensions, and ongoing international crises are increasingly shaping our operating environment and leaving a tangible mark on our industry.

At the same time, challenges within our European markets remain significant. Issues such as glycoalkaloids, wireworms, stolbur, virus pressure, and late blight control, combined with an evolving and often complex European regulatory framework, require constant vigilance and sustained engagement.

Responding constructively to change at such pace is no easy task. A return to "business as usual" is unlikely. Instead, this new reality calls for renewed entrepreneurial spirit, innovation, and strong commitment across the sector.

In this context, Europatat continues to strengthen its role. The association is actively contributing to addressing sector challenges and exploring new opportunities, not only within our membership, but across the entire potato value chain and in our engagement with European institutions. The joint celebration of the International Day of Potato in Brussels stands out as a particularly successful initiative, receiving very positive feedback.

Our six-year promotional campaign, *"Potatoes, prepare to be surprised"* has now successfully concluded. Looking ahead, Europatat will remain actively involved in promotion and research projects, recognising their strategic importance—not least as they also contribute to the financial sustainability of our association.

The creation of a Working Group of National Associations reflects their growing importance in shaping European discussions and will become even more relevant in the years to come.

Furthermore, after several years of dedicated work, we have successfully delivered an updated version of the RUCIP trading conditions, aligned with current market realities.

We are also pleased to have welcomed new members and to have strengthened our cooperation with the World Potato Congress. In this context, I am proud that our Director General has been appointed as an International Advisor.

Yes, we are facing major challenges and a significant workload. But equally, Europatat brings together an exceptional level of expertise and knowledge. Strengthening cooperation across all Commissions and Working Groups, implementing agreed strategies, and ensuring the active participation of all members will be key to securing the future success of our sector.

As my term as President comes to an end, I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank everyone who has contributed to Europatat's work over the past years. I encourage all of you to continue working together to safeguard and shape the framework conditions necessary for a strong and resilient potato trade.

Tigran Richter
President of Europatat