

## Sugar cane refiners being discriminated against beet processors in Europe, new report says

*Brussels, 13th November 2012* – According to a report recently released by independent consultant Joan Noble, **“in a sense, cane sugar refiners are being discriminated against beet processors because they don’t have an equivalent access to raw materials.”**

Despite the investments in cane sugar refineries encouraged by the 2006 sugar reform, the lack of supply is jeopardising the future of the refining sector across Europe. **“Cane refiners are crucial in bringing competition especially with a heavily consolidated beet industry, as concluded by the European Court of Auditors”**, highlighted Noble.

Joan Noble, who has previously worked on a report for the European Parliament on the different Policy scenarios for the EU sugar market reform, presented the critical situation of the cane sugar refining at a workshop organised at the European Parliament. Entitled **“Sugar: There is more than beet and quotas. Market Balance and consumer choice”** this event was organised by the European Sugar Refiners Association (ESRA) and hosted by the Member of the European Parliament, Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (EPP).

Patrão Neves explained that various MEPs from different political groups and nationalities have already taken the initiative to create a taskforce in order to ensure immediate measures are taken to address the lack of supply the refiners are facing. **“Our main goal is to find a balanced solution for both industry and consumers. We are going to take into account the cane refiners’ and sugar beet processors’ interests, equally.”**

In his final remarks, the President of ESRA, Joao Pereira, stated that **“we fully support the co-existence of different sweeteners producers in the EU as it has been the case for many years”**. However, cane refiners deserve a **“fair chance to compete and this is only possible if conflicting interests are balanced and, more importantly, if equal access to raw materials is guaranteed. As long as a beet quota exists, sugar refiners should have a supply entitlement to achieve a level playing field”**, he concluded.

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**About ESRA:** *The European Sugar Refineries Association represents 26 full-time cane sugar refineries located in 8 EU Member States. ESRA supports a sugar market reform which recognises and respects the key role cane sugar refiners play in the EU.*