



## **“The voice of SMEs in Europe”**

### **Press Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **Small Businesses and foodstuffs: MEPs join UEAPME’s call against compulsory documentation in artisanal food production process**

**Brussels, 19th June 2003.** On the occasion of a breakfast meeting organised yesterday by the European Small and Medium Enterprises Association, UEAPME, 17 members of the European Parliament from all party groups expressed their backing of the longstanding work of UEAPME against a compulsory documentation for SMEs in the food production process. The question of necessary records for small food manufacturers business had been introduced in the proposed Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on the hygiene of foodstuffs.

While being an indispensable instrument to track the food making process in large food manufacturing corporations, obligatory documentation is unsuitable for small traditional food makers. “Compulsory documentation is not realistic for small and artisanal food producers”, said UEAPME’s Secretary General Mr. **Hans Werner Müller**, “imagine a pastry maker who often has only one or two adjutants having to register all the ingredients he uses in a computer before he can open up his shop. It is simply unfeasible and would cause many small food producers to go out of business!” he pointed out.

Müller further argued that because of the proximity to the community, compulsory labelling and documentation would be superfluous for small food producers. Additionally, the variety of ingredients used would make these tasks simply impossible to cope with for small businesses. UEAPME therefore urges the European Council to reconsider the Parliament request to impose compulsory documentation only in the cases in which the nature and size of the food business requires such initiatives.

UEAPME praised the efforts of the Commission to increase consumer safety but argued that these must be adapted to the vast majority of food producers, which are small businesses. The Members of the European Parliament offered their support for SMEs on this issue.

\*\*\*\*\* End \*\*\*\*\*

**Note to editors:** For further information, please contact Dr. Ludger Fischer on tel +32 2 285 0724

Raphael Anspach, Press officer  
Tel: +32 2 230 7599/ Fax: +32 2230 7861  
Email: [pressoffice@ueapme.com](mailto:pressoffice@ueapme.com)  
Web: [www.ueapme.com/pressroom](http://www.ueapme.com/pressroom)