



**Welcome to the XXII EURAGRI MEMBERS
CONFERENCE held at Research Center Foulum on
September 17th – 20th, 2008.**

In the coming years Europe will face several serious challenges – and opportunities.

In many regions climate change will affect regional water resources and thus the possibilities for food production. An increasing world population coupled with a dwindling stockpile of fossil fuels will increase the demand for food, feed, biofuels and other biomass products. An ageing European population will increase the need for healthcare and health related products. All these challenges in an increasingly globalized market will test the competitiveness of the European countries.

However, we have the opportunities at our disposal to solve the tasks ahead. Successful incorporation of new technologies such as biotechnology, nanotechnology, ICT and robotics will be the essentials in this endeavour. They will also help us reach our aims in a sustainable way, where economic, environmental and social aspects will be considered. Though, increased investment in education, technology, innovation and infrastructure will be a fundamental prerequisite.

Due to the inherent trans-national nature of the challenges most of them cannot effectively be solved by individual nations. Effective pan-European cooperation in food and agriculture research is therefore required.

EURAGRI is an important forum for the discussion of the challenges for European agricultural research. Designed to encourage and support research cooperation, networking and work sharing beyond national boundaries, the EURAGRI initiative will become an essential tool for the reflections on the future of the European Agriculture Research Area and for the Common Agricultural Policy.

Therefore, I am extremely happy that we have been able to attract so many prominent research leaders from all over Europe. This will certainly result in a very interesting and productive conference.

I am confident of the fact that the discussions will be productive and look forward to learn from the results.

Eva Kjer Hansen
Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries