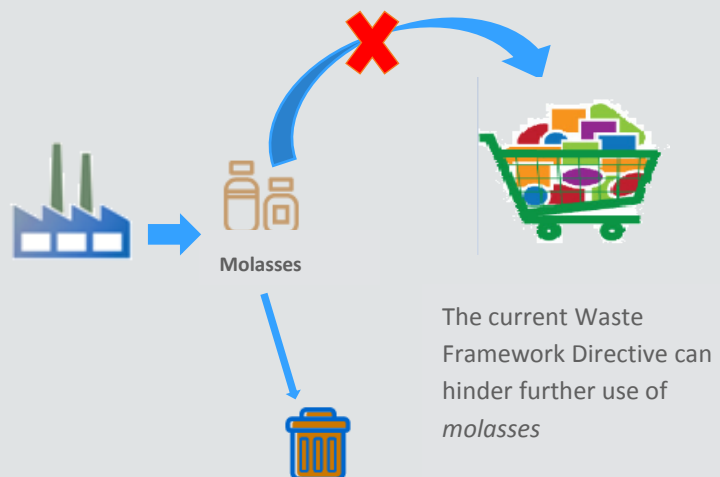# By-products and waste definition: the case of molasses

The current provisions on by-products and the waste definition are hindering the transition towards a circular economy

⚠️ Valuable materials are often classified as waste by national authorities. This situation prevents the development of production processes keeping resources in the loop, like industrial symbiosis.

Molasses* is a by-product of the sugar manufacturing process. For decades, the fermentation industry has used molasses as raw material to make products like vitamin C, antibiotics, citric acid, amino acids, lactic acid and polylactic acid (bioplastics). However, current EU by-products provisions leave national authorities free to classify molasses as waste. This classification prevents the fermentation industry from keeping molasses in the economy and runs against the EU objective to develop an innovative circular economy and bioeconomy in Europe.

Molasses

The current Waste Framework Directive can hinder further use of *molasses*

Key recommendations

Amend the provisions on by-products under the Waste Framework Directive to ensure that no valuable materials, such as molasses, are classified as waste.

Assess, under the REFIT programme, to what extent the current definition of waste is fit for the transition towards a circular economy.

*Molasses is a by-product of the sugar industry. It is widely used as an animal feed and as a raw material of the fermentation industry to produce important products such as: lactic acid – used to create bioplastics; citric acid – helping to reduce food waste; amino acids – reinforcing animal feed; vitamin C – boosting immune systems; and antibiotics – curing bacterial infections

For more information please contact:
Marc Vermeulen, Director Food Chain and Protective Applications, Cefic,
+32.2.676.74.46 or mve@cefic.be.

About Cefic
Cefic, the European Chemical Industry Council, founded in 1972, is the voice of 29,000 large, medium and small chemical companies in Europe, which provide 1.2 million jobs and account for 17% of world chemicals production.