The Autorité de la concurrence clears the merger of agricultural cooperatives Océalia and Natéa

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On 25 November 2019, the agricultural cooperative Océalia notified the *Autorité de la concurrence* of its proposed merger by takeover of agricultural cooperative Natéa.

The parties to the transaction

The agricultural cooperative Océalia belongs to Océalia, which is active in the collection and marketing of cereal, oilseed and pulse crops, consulting and sale of agricultural supplies, operation of garden centres (under the brands Gamm Vert, Gamm Vert Village and Gamm Vert Nature), production and sale of seeds, production and sale of popcorn, and production of foods for animal nutrition, in the Nouvelle Aquitaine and Poitou-Charentes regions.

The Natéa cooperative, present only in the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region (specifically in the former region of Limousin), is active in the collection and marketing of cereal, oilseed and pulse crops, consulting and sale of agricultural supplies, operation of garden centres (under the trade names Gamm Vert and Gamm Vert Village) and the production, multiplication and marketing of seeds.

The Autorité clears the takeover unconditionally

The *Autorité* examined the overlap between the parties' activities, notably in the former region of Limousin, and particularly in the *département* of Haute-Vienne (87).

While there is only slight overlap in the animal nutrition and gardening, DIY, landscaping and pet product retail distribution markets, the *Autorité* had to carefully examine the risks of significantly reducing local competition in the cereal, oilseed and pulse crop collection sector and in the agricultural supply distribution markets. It based its review on recent and extensive decision-making practice, and consulted stakeholders in these markets.

Following its investigation, the *Autorité* considered that the level of competition, notably in terms of price, will remain sufficient to rule out any risk of the transaction harming competition.

The *Autorité* therefore cleared the transaction unconditionally.

> See the full text of the decision 19-DCC-266 of the 27 December 2019

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