



**THE 2020
COMMON
AGRICULTURAL
POLICY REFORM**

**EUROGROUP
FOR ANIMALS**



OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

STRATEGIC PLANS REGULATION

- *A regulatory definition of industrial farm animal production (or Confined Animal Feeding Operations – “CAFOs”)*
- *CAFOs’ ineligibility for public funding under the CAP*

Conditionality:

- *4 New SMRs covering all EU farm animal welfare legislation*
- *1 New GAEC phasing out extreme confinement*
- *Possibility for Member States to enact stricter SMRs and GAEC*

Eco-Schemes:

- *Inclusion of animal welfare in the eco-schemes*

Pillar II:

- *Mandatory Animal Welfare Measure in the National Rural Development Plans*
- *Possibility for Member States to increase inter-pillar transfers for the purpose of funding animal welfare measures*
- *Extending conditionality to Pillar II*

HORIZONTAL REGULATION

- *Prohibiting early warnings in cases of breach with animal welfare rules*
- *A larger control sample*
- *More deterring penalties*

COMMON ORGANIZATION OF THE MARKETS (CMOs) REGULATION

- *No further restrictions on protected definitions, designations, and sales descriptions of plant-based food products*



1. CONTEXT

In 1962, the six founding Member States of the European Economic Community vowed to restore Europe's capacity to feed itself through the creation of the Common Agricultural Policy ("CAP"). Very quickly, the CAP was successful in achieving food security, so much so that as early as the 1970s farmers started over producing food.

Although the CAP has undergone several reforms aiming to adapt the agricultural support systems to past and current challenges, these reforms have failed to deliver results in transitioning to a more sustainable agriculture and away from intensive production methods. Quite the opposite, the CAP has in fact incentivised the intensification of agriculture across Europe.

The predominant business model has become that of the so-called 'factory farms,' where extreme confinement of animals is the norm, entailing excessive use of antibiotics, environmental pollution and degraded labour conditions for workers along the production chain.

Such an orientation in policy stands in sharp contrast with the overwhelming commitment of EU citizens towards farm animal welfare and the societal demand for a CAP more effective in delivering on farm animal welfare objectives.

2. THE PRESSING NEED FOR A CAP REFORM

The CAP must adjust to tackle current major challenges linked to agricultural and food systems: climate change, environmental pollution, water depletion, poor labor conditions for farmers, and rampant antimicrobial resistance.

While the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) successfully achieved its mandate to support European agriculture, it has also encouraged the proliferation of industrial farm animal production across Europe, where extreme confinement of animals for food has become the norm.

“CAP must adjust to tackle current major challenges: climate change, environmental pollution, water depletion, and rampant antimicrobial resistance.”

Consolidation, a phenomenon by which farms get fewer and bigger, largely affected the European animal agriculture sector as 83% of farm animals were reportedly kept on large and very large farms in 2013 – 10% more than in 2005.

At the same time, studies by environmental scientists have multiplied over the past decade, further evidencing the link between industrial farm animal production and large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions due to the sheer numbers of animals confined in facilities, the massive production and spread of faeces, and the over reliance on imported animal feed, such as soya and corn from South America. As a result, experts and environmental NGOs such as Greenpeace have called on reducing meat consumption by 50%. In the EU member states, trends in food consumption are already reflective of a reduction in meat and animal products consumption, with the rise in popularity of alternative diets, such as plant-based, flexitarian or reductarian diets.

Industrial farm animal production is also detrimental to public health. In addition to the production of highly-processed meat and dairy products, and the emissions of greenhouse gases in rural communities, the excessive use of antibiotics on farms represent a direct threat to antimicrobial efficiency in human and animal populations.

Not only is a reform urgent, it is also timely because of the broader EU political context.

The political context in which the 2020 CAP Reform takes place is unprecedented: EU policymakers have experienced a growing gap between the EU citizens and the EU institutions, which culminated in the withdrawal of the UK from the EU ('Brexit'). The public opinion is also in support of higher farm animal welfare standards: throughout the years, polls have demonstrated the overwhelming commitment of EU citizens towards farm animal welfare, as more than nine in ten EU voters believe it is important to protect the welfare of farmed animals and 82% of them believe the welfare of farmed animals should be better protected than it currently is.

“European citizens overwhelmingly support higher farm animal welfare standards and extensive farming systems.”

In the past few years, millions of citizens have called on the EU institutions to improve the welfare of animals, including that of farm animals, by petitioning against the transport of live animals, the mutilation of piglets, and through two European Citizens' Initiatives (ECI) on live transport and the use of cages in industrial livestock production (currently ongoing). The CAP reform therefore is an opportunity for EU representatives to show they listen to their constituents.

The reform is also timely due to budgetary considerations.

As a result of the UK's withdrawal from the EU and the demands of other policy areas (defence and migration), the CAP budget will be diminished, thus prompting policymakers to make a more targeted, fairer use of public money.

By supporting farmers in the production of goods that benefit society at large, the CAP could reverse the trend of factory farming and bring relief to rural communities and consumers who have been disproportionately burdening the externalities of intensive livestock producers.

The multiple benefits of animal welfare

High level of farm animal welfare would also benefit other priority EU policy areas:



PUBLIC HEALTH



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



RURAL DEVELOPMENT



GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

3. ISSUES WITH ANIMAL WELFARE MEASURES IN THE CURRENT CAP:

Animal Welfare as an Option under Pillar II

Since 2003, animal welfare is listed as an objective of the CAP and is matched with a dedicated payment. Member states willing to include animal welfare in their Rural Development Plans (RDPs) can thus choose to do so.

Despite the inclusion of this animal welfare component, the CAP still fails improve the welfare of farm animals: first, animal welfare is not a compulsory measure of the RDPs under Pillar II; second, Pillar II payments only accounts for 20% of the income farmers receive from the CAP, and because animal welfare measures do not benefit from minimum funding, animal welfare-related payments account for only a small portion of potential revenues. Third, animal welfare measures under Pillar II are not tied to strict animal welfare criteria with effective reporting and inspection mechanisms.

Another issue is that animal welfare payments are often diverted from their intended target through the modernisation of intensive livestock production systems for instance, which only improves animal welfare marginally and further entrenches factory farming.

Make Animal Welfare a Priority

Animal welfare should be a priority in the next CAP. Like environmental protection in the mid-1990s, animal welfare as an objective should benefit from ambitious policy instruments. Since the enactment of animal welfare measures in 2003, the revision of policy instruments related to animal welfare is long overdue from two perspectives: firstly the content of policy instruments intended to address animal welfare, as not all animal welfare legislation is included in the current CAP, and secondly the persistent lack of

enforcement of animal welfare standards included in the CAP.

A Common Agricultural & Food Policy

On a broader, structural level, it is also time the CAP fully recognises the indirect yet significant effect of subsidies on what European consumers find in the aisles of supermarkets, both in terms of what products they find (quality and variety) and how much products there is (quantity).

A well-designed CAP should therefore include a food policy component, by which it would encourage the production of fruits and vegetables in volumes allowing consumers to afford healthy and diversified products; incentivise the production of 'less-but-better' meat and dairy products, while deterring the overproduction of cheap meat and dairy; and invest in the research and development of novel food processes that are both beneficial from a health, environmental and animal welfare perspectives.

Another important section of a well-designed food policy would make use of promotional measures in a way that primarily benefits healthy plant-based products, defined as such in accordance with official nutritional guidelines.



ENDNOTES

¹ European Commission, Statistics Explained, Share of livestock units by economic size of farm, EU-28, 2005–2013, available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Share_of_livestock_units,_by_economic_size_of_farm,_EU-28,_2005%E2%80%932013_\(%25_of_total\).png&oldid=315699](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Share_of_livestock_units,_by_economic_size_of_farm,_EU-28,_2005%E2%80%932013_(%25_of_total).png&oldid=315699)

² Greenpeace, Less is More, Reducing Meat and Dairy for a Healthier Life and Planet, available at: https://storage.googleapis.com/planet4-international-stateless/2018/03/698c-4c4a-summary_greenpeace-livestock-vision-towards-2050.pdf

³ G. Pe'er, S. Lakner et al., Is the CAP Fit for Purpose? An Evidence-Based Fitness Check Assessment (2017), Leipzig, German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv), Halle-Jena-Leipzig, p. 58, available at: <http://extranet.greens-efa-service.eu/public/media/file/1/5401>

Any questions? Get in touch:

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