



10 PRIORITIES FOR **THE CAP REFORM** AND BEYOND

An outcome from the event
CAP: fund farms, not factories!





THE GREENS/EFA
in the European Parliament

The Greens/EFA group in the European parliament

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Design and Layout: Aupluriel (www.aupluriel.be)

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What kind of agriculture do we want? What kind of animal agriculture should the European Union promote through its various policies, including of course its Common Agricultural Policy?

While intensive, industrial animal agriculture has been on the rise for the past decades, the numbers of small and medium farms have been dropping all over Europe. The farms keep getting bigger, the herds and flocks and broods keep increasing in numbers, to the point where one hesitates to use the name “farm”. In truth, the Common Agricultural Policy seems to have contributed to the rise of what one can only describe as “agricultural factories”, in which animals are degraded to mere units of production.

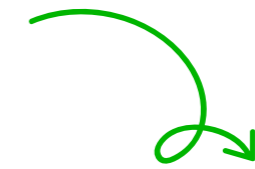
In the context of the current CAP reform process, which will lead to a CAP post-2020, the Greens/EFA group recognised the need to organise an event focused on this matter. Moderated by Rose O’Donovan (Agrafacts), the debate and discussion unfolded in three parts and along three different questions.

First, what is the effect of intensive animal

farming and the increasing number of mega-farms across Europe, on rural communities, on our environment, on biodiversity, on the animals, on our health? In an effort to answer this question, representatives from civil society brought their respective expertise to the table; Rosa Diez Tagarro (STOP Ganadería Industrial), Andreas Manz (Four Paws), Marco Contiero (Greenpeace) addressed the current and expected impact of factory farms.

Then, we wondered about the CAP’s interaction with other EU policies and its relation to the Treaties and its principles. Michael Cardwell, Professor of Agricultural Law at Leeds University and Luiz Carazo, representative from the European Commission (DG AGRI) discussed the question whether supporting factory farming is in line with the legal principle of policy coherence.

Finally, Members of Parliament Maria Heubuch, Florent Marcellesi, Tilly Metz and Thomas Waitz, addressed the question: what should the Greens/EFA take away from this and what is their proposal for a fairer, more sustainable agriculture and food system? 10 Green priorities, for the CAP reform and beyond emerged.



“ Maybe we are David against Goliath. But, sometimes, David wins and, of course, he always has to fight ”

Rosa Diez Tagarro
STOP Ganadería Industrial



Coherence of the agriculture policy with other related policies

A general priority is the improvement of many sides within the CAP, which includes the explicit recognition of the importance of policy coherence within the new CAP. We need to align the CAP with climate, environment, biodiversity, health and animal welfare policies. A better, more sustainable CAP also implies working out a balanced and sufficient budget, with enough funding for climate, environmental and animal welfare measures, as well as rural development. Concerning animal agriculture, no public money should go towards its further intensification.



A fairer distribution of funding between CAP beneficiaries

Under the previous and current systems, with a payment per hectare system setting a limit at 500.000€ per year per beneficiary, the bigger you are, the more you get, with very little redistribution towards smaller farms. Given the dwindling numbers of farms throughout the European Union and the struggles many small and medium-sized farms experience, we think it is time for a change: Time for a fairer CAP! Capping the payments beneficiaries can receive is a crucial step towards this, combined with a fair redistribution of funding towards smaller farms.

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The valorisation of extensive animal agriculture

Whereas intensive, big-scale animal agriculture brings with it a plethora of issues for our environment and rural communities, extensive animal agriculture has many beneficial aspects. Lesser animals for more space, in a more natural setting, means less stress on the environment and water resources, less need for antibiotics, and, for many species, less need for additional feed. Extensive animal agriculture thus needs to be valorised within the next CAP. Incentives, advice and support must be devised for farmers open to transitioning towards more extensive animal farming.



“ How can it be possible that we are investing billions on climate protection and health and, at the same time, we are spending billions **of tax payer’s money** in a form of agriculture that **pollutes the environment** and **makes citizens ill or less healthy?** It is not consistent ”

Thomas Waitz

Austrian MEP

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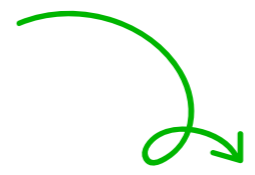
Reduction of total livestock numbers

Shifting away from intensive, industrial animal agriculture, towards more extensive models of agriculture, goes hand in hand with a reduced stocking density and inevitably leads to a reduction of total livestock numbers. That is a change we want to encourage and one that we fully embrace, given its positive impacts on the climate, the environment, biodiversity and public health.

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Conditionality combined with efficient control system

CAP payments are subject to the condition of complying with a defined set of rules, on environmental care, public health, animal welfare... Regarding animal agriculture, it is a priority for it to include rules on the management of nutrients and water quality, as well as all existing EU animal welfare legislation, as this would make “business as usual” difficult for mega-farms, if they want to continue receiving CAP support. However, there is no use in adding rules to a compliance system if there is not a monitoring system, or any other guarantee of its enforcement. Farmers on the other hand should not be buried under administrative work. The solution is to incorporate more interactive, cooperative and efficient advisory and control systems: Constructive help for farmers wishing to adapt their productions in order to comply with the rules, dissuasive sanctions for beneficiaries who repeatedly refuse to comply.



“ We demand at least **30% spending for the eco-schemes**, and a proper calculation method on climate impact. We want to ensure that **public money benefits those farms that are doing the most** for the environment, climate, animal welfare and rural areas. That’s our vision for a greener CAP. ”



Maria Heubuch
German MEP



Working hand in hand with farmers

Many farmers feel trapped in the current situation; blamed for climate change, loss of biodiversity, deterioration of soils and water resources, they have become the scapegoats for many issues of our time. Yet, while they feed the continent, maintain rural landscapes and keep rural communities alive, many barely make a living and even more are heavily in debt. We do not want to scapegoat, we do not want to demonise and we certainly do not want to leave people behind. Shifting away from intensive, industrial agriculture, we want to work hand in hand with farmers, young and old, new entrants and experienced. Farm advisory services have to be stocked up and modernised, they have to actively offer their expertise to farmers open for more sustainable farming methods and assist them throughout the process. And when farmers take the jump and change to less intensive methods, we need to support them by sharing the financial risk of doing so.



Public money for public goods

A portion of the CAP budget goes towards support to agricultural investments. For decades, the CAP has supported farmers seeking investments for the intensification of their production and has thereby contributed to leading millions of farmers into life-long debt. Any future investment support should go through a comprehensive public goods audit (what is the impact on the climate, the environment, biodiversity, public health). Public support for investment leading to the further intensification and industrialisation of animal agriculture would fall right through that test. Moreover, advisory services must carefully warn farmers not to enter unreasonable debt-traps.



New legislation on animal welfare

Under current animal welfare legislation, most farm species can still be kept under pretty appalling conditions, with little to no respect for their natural needs and welfare. Some species are not covered by any specific EU legislation, others are covered by outdated and insufficient ones. It is time to adapt and to adopt legislation in accordance with best available scientific knowledge and a little bit of heart. In this context, we also strive to make cages in animal farming a thing of the past. To that end, we are actively promoting the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) 'End the Cage Age' in order for it to reach the needed 1 Million signatures across Europe, and we will put pressure on the Commission to follow through once that bar is reached.



Honest and efficient labelling

An overwhelming number of citizens wish for a more sustainable and fairer agricultural system. Yet, they often have no way of recognising and rewarding products, which strive to achieve this goal. We want to empower consumers, by helping them differentiate between products (including processed products). Honest and efficient labelling for all animal products must be introduced at EU-level. Harmonised EU-labels for plant-based products are an additional necessity.



“ Empowering and giving honest information to citizens is important. **Where does the product come from?** How was it produced? 82% of citizens really care about animal welfare, and we all care about the climate, young people are in the streets! Let’s give them transparent information. ”

Tilly Metz
Luxembourgish MEP

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A reduced consumption of animal products

Science is clear: the climate and our finite resources have no way to keep up with our current level of consumption of animal products. We also understand it is a numbers game: less intensive and more extensive animal agriculture and overall reduced stocking densities also means less animals overall and thus, in the end, less animal products. A transition towards more plant-based diets has already tentatively begun in many places. We know need to create an environment that clearly facilitates and encourages a reduced consumption of animal products. Changes to public procurement guidelines (more plants) and public nutrition guidelines (more plants) is a great start!



“ We produce massive amounts of meat in macro farms to sell it in macro supermarkets. We have to reduce meat consumption, unapologetically. We have to end this vicious circle. ”

Florent Marcellesi
Spanish MEP

Conclusion

The Green Group/EFA would like to thank all the speakers and participants for their contributions. We, Greens, in the current discussion at the level of the European Parliament, are pushing for improve the CAP in order to make it more coherent, respectful of our health, biodiversity, fairer for farmers, and a CAP that better uses citizens money to finance public good. A first vote on the CAP will take place in the European Parliament on 2nd April.

But this won't be the final game: citizens vote at next EU elections will play a key role on the shape of the new CAP post 2020. With a good representation of Green MEPs in the European Parliament there will be better chances to go beyond the status quo in the new mandate and call for a more sustainable and coherent agriculture policy for Europe.

Link to watch the event:

<https://www.greens-efa.eu/en/article/event/cap-fund-farms-not-factories/>

Further information:

Greens/EFA CAP policy paper

What can you do?

How would you like EU citizens' money to be spent for agriculture?
What are your priorities for the EU agriculture policy?
Take action and join
www.yourcapreform.eu
to share your vision of the future of the CAP.



60 rue Wiertz/Wiertzstraat 60
1047 Brussels, Belgium
www.greens-efa.eu
contactgreens@ep.europa.eu