

## **Submission to European Commission Public Consultation on the Future of the CAP**

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### **Why do we need a European common agricultural policy?**

We welcome this opportunity to submit our position on the future of the CAP. It is essential that the EU maintains a strong CAP that will deliver for farmers, rural communities, and the environment and will ensure food security.

It is essential that the EU has the capacity to deliver high quality produce. Climate change will act as a constraint on farmers to increase supply. A strong CAP is needed to address these limitations and ensure that the consumers have access to high quality produce at reasonable prices.

European farmers produce food to the highest quality and standards. The CAP must ensure that European agricultural products are well marketed and competitive. All imports must be produced to the same standard as EU products to ensure a level playing field.

European agriculture is a major employer. A forward-looking CAP is the best mechanism for contributing to jobs in local communities and ensuring the viability of farming as a profession in rural areas.

Agriculture is a sector well placed to mitigate climate change and to manage natural resources sustainably. There is huge potential in agriculture and increased research and innovation is needed in the future CAP.

### **What do citizens expect from agriculture?**

European citizens, as indicated by recent surveys, are supportive of European agriculture and European farmers and they expect funding directed towards agriculture to be used effectively, transparently and to deliver measurable results.

The future CAP is expected to develop and support rural communities, encourage vibrant rural life, the continued existence of family farms and the tradition of farming.

Citizens expect a continuation of the safe, high quality choice of affordable food that the current CAP delivers for them. Ensuring that European farmers continue to maintain a high standard of animal welfare in European agriculture is also a key concern.

Climate change is a pressing issue and citizens expect agriculture to deliver on its potential to mitigate the effects of climate change and to be conducted and managed in a sustainable and responsible manner with respect to natural resources and farming for future generations.

## **Why reform the CAP?**

There are many challenges facing European agriculture and the CAP needs to be progressive, flexible and responsive to the needs to European farmers. We need a forward-looking policy that will encourage young people into agriculture, offering them a viable livelihood in which they are rewarded for the delivery of public goods.

In the context of the current economic crisis a CAP is needed which can deliver clear and measurable aims, is targeted and will be applied in a transparent and equitable manner. Measures are needed to ensure that the markets work properly, and farmers receive a fair income for farming and that there is increased fairness among the players in the food supply chain.

The CAP needs to be reformed so that the potential of agriculture in terms of combating climate change can be maximised. Increased focus is needed on the green knowledge economy and research and innovation in agriculture must be supported and enhanced.

There is a need to reform the CAP in order to formulate a policy that will increase competitiveness in the global market, reduce administrative burdens on farmers, work on a practical level for the farmer and deliver for the citizens.

## **What tools do we need for the CAP of tomorrow?**

The central requirement for the CAP is a strong budget that will enable it to deliver for the EU. It is essential that a common policy is maintained and there are no moves towards re-nationalisation of financing which could harm the EU single market.

Market support measures are needed which will be activated when the situation requires them. Farmers need to be guaranteed a reliable income for the delivery of public goods and to be assured of fairness in the food supply chain.

In terms of the payment model, flexibility is central to the fairness of the future policy. It is essential that account is taken of all variables in determining the objective criteria for a payments model that will deliver for farmers.

The future CAP needs to be structured to ensure fair competition in the market. The European farmer must not be put at a disadvantage with the introduction of cheaper and lower quality imports.

Transparency should be central to the future CAP; the policy should support farmers and not burden them with excessive red tape.

Targeted support for disadvantaged rural areas must be built upon in order to ensure that the potential of the CAP is delivered to farmers and communities.