



12 July 2016  
Brussels

Dear President Juncker

Dear Vice President Timmermans

The undersigned Members of the European Parliament believe that the current food and farming system is largely broken and that the main policy currently addressing it – the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) – requires an urgent assessment, as it seems not equipped to address the fundamental challenges that Europe is facing in this sector. We therefore call on you to start a process to review that policy in depth.

Some of the most important indicators of the state of the food and farming system in Europe include an unfair system for farmers, a constant crisis on agricultural markets, a continuous decline in the state of natural resources, failures in delivering on animal welfare, negative public health outcomes, and severe negative impacts beyond Europe's borders. An overwhelming body of scientific evidence points to the damage done to, not only to our environment, but also the health of EU citizens, by present intensive farming systems and pesticide use.

The CAP has not only failed to prevent these problems but in many cases has exacerbated them; it is also an administratively inefficient policy containing a lot of administrative burdens for fairly poor outcomes. The CAP as it stands rewards large-scale actors who barely comply with the minimum standards. The logic of allocating subsidies should be turned around: high safety and animal welfare standards should be the norm and anything below that should fall under lower / non – subsidies. It also fails to support sustainable food production to a sufficient extend.

Yet this policy, which accounts for almost 40% of the EU Budget, has not yet been identified for an in depth evaluation so far. We believe that this represents a missed opportunity, especially in light of the issues raised above, which clearly suggest this policy's inability to address key societal concerns.

In light of the Commission's Better Regulation agenda, high levels of euroscepticism which are challenging the EU and its ability to reform itself, and the fact that an increasing number of governments are facing severe budget constraints, the time has come to fundamentally question the CAP and verify whether it is good value for money and whether it fulfils its objectives. This challenge cannot be

addressed by a limited exercise, such as the previous round of reform, nor with the marginal changes to its 'greening' component done through simplification.

We consider that a Fitness Check process will ensure that fundamental questions will be asked about the structure of the policy and some of its basic principles, which have been left untouched for.

Your Sincerely,

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