



Brussels, 12 October 2011

CAP 2104-2020:

European Commission proposals fail to tackle food speculation and environmental crisis.

Sustainable family farming would continue to disappear.

Brussels, October 12, 2011 – The European Commission announced proposals for the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) today. Essential steps towards tackling rising food speculation are missing, and the proposed policy will fail to bring substantial benefits to sustainable family farmers, citizens or the environment, according to the ‘European Movement for Food Sovereignty and Another CAP’ (Foodsovcap).

Instead of introducing clear market measures that stabilise farm prices at a fair level, the Commission suggests spending money on insurance schemes and on ‘crisis and globalisation funds’ which are said to compensate farmers for their losses in times of environmental or food crises, and for the adverse results of the liberalisation of the markets. These measures will do nothing to prevent rising prices for resources but low incomes for farmers, nor will they ensure better pay or working conditions for food workers, claim the Foodsovcap movement. The proposals will not counter flourishing speculation on agricultural markets resulting in higher food prices for people in Europe.

Irmi Salzer, from European coordination Via Campesina said, *“Europe is facing big environmental and farm crises and it is disappointing that the Commission has missed this golden opportunity to take a first step to ensure that European farmers will no longer lose out to agro-industry, supermarkets, speculators and the export companies. It seems that a trade- fixated food industry will still be able to continue making a lot of money, while farmers in Europe disappear, raw materials from the South are shipped to us at a high cost for the environment, and people abandon European rural areas.”*

Stanka Becheva, food campaigner at Friends of the Earth Europe continued: *“Agriculture in Europe is in a mess – with farmers and wildlife disappearing at an unprecedented rate. We need a root and branch reform of European farming that benefits people and the environment. We need strict and bold measures addressing the challenges we face in protecting our soil, water, seeds and biodiversity for future generations. Today’s proposals don’t look any good.”*

Alexandra Strickner from the European Attac Network emphasized: *“Instead of acknowledging the failure of unregulated agricultural markets and consequently introducing measures such as the management of production, public food stocks and new mechanisms to allow the negotiation of fair prices for farmers, food workers and consumers on the one hand and less profits for the food industry, super markets and financial speculators on the other hand, the Commission continues to propose ‘business as usual’ policies.”*

The Foodsovcap movement proposed a policy option that promotes a Common Food and Agriculture Policy in Europe that puts the interest of farmers, food workers, consumers and the environment in Europe and globally at its heart [1]. The future CAP must move European agriculture towards agro-ecological methods of production. Such a CAP reform must include:

- public supply management to balance supply and demand of agricultural products and avoid structural surpluses. This will prevent prices from fluctuating excessively. Various instruments adapted to the different productions have to be developed;
- management of agricultural imports to avoid imports at prices below the European average cost of production. This should be linked to the banning of all forms of market dumping in other countries;
- prioritizing the maintenance of sustainable family farming all over Europe, which involves numerous farmers producing food and caring for the countryside;
- Setting a cap on direct payments as well as defining strict environmental and social criteria – only farmers respecting those criteria should be eligible for direct payments;
- transparency along the food chain so that citizens know how their food is produced, where it comes from, what it contains and what is included in the price paid by consumers;
- an end to the negotiation of ‘free-trade’ agreements between the EU and third countries (Mercosur, Canada, Ukraine,...) which would benefit companies and not citizens.

The Foodsovcap network launches today a short video on CAP available at:

<http://nyelenieurope.net/foodsovcap/>

[1] The MISSING option for the Common Agricultural Policy post 2013:

<http://www.europeanfooddeclaration.org/sites/default/files/11%2003%2025%20the%20fourth.%20missing%20option%20for%20EU%20food%20and%20agricu%E2%80%A6.pdf>

Proposal for a New European Agriculture and Food policy *that meets the challenges of this century:*

<http://www.europeanfooddeclaration.org/sites/default/files/10%2007%2029%20%20Proposal%20%20for%20a%20New%20EU%20Agr%20and%20Food%20Policy.%20AT%20J%E2%80%A6.pdf>

For more information, please contact:

Irmi Salzer, European Coordination Via Campesina

Tel: + 4369911827634 irmi.salzer@gmx.at

Stanka Becheva, food campaigner for Friends of the Earth Europe

Tel: +32 (0) 2893 1025, stanka.becheva@foeurope.org

Alexandra Strickner, European ATTAC Network

Tel : +43 664 104 84 28 alexandra.strickner@attac.at

Gert Engelen, advocacy officer Vredeseilanden

Tel.: +32 (0) 497 38 13 77, Gert.Engelen@vredeseilanden.be

Greet Goverde, secretary of Platform Aarde Boer Consument, the Netherlands

Tel.: +31 24 3443678, h.goverde@chello.nl