

European policy makers must wake up for CAP change now!

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- **Civil society increasingly alarmed at lack of ambition among EU decision makers.**
- **The Good Food March to Brussels comes at a timely moment in the debate on the future of European food and farming. Website launched today: www.goodfoodmarch.eu**

Brussels 19/06/2012 – This week Agriculture Ministers and Members of the European Parliament discussed the current state of play on the direction of the CAP 2014-2020 (1). Civil society platform, ARC2020 is increasingly alarmed at the lack of ambition among EU decision makers to deliver a CAP that is capable of responding to the Union's growing environmental and economic challenges.

In the Agriculture Council, Ministers seem to be more concerned with maintaining a piecemeal approach to the CAP reform and protecting vested interests, than responding to the ecological and socio-economic needs of farmers and society in any meaningful way.

Véronique Rebholtz, Coordinator of ARC2020 today said:

“The Progress Report presented by the Danish Minister for Agriculture, Mette Gjerskov, shows that the Council may miss the opportunity to create an effective and coherent greening component. Civil society is demanding a real paradigm change for the CAP. If the EU's national farm ministers want a CAP that is supported by society, they must stop ignoring our calls for constructive and long-lasting changes that actually respond to the needs of farmers and rural communities.”

Meanwhile, an initial assessment of the draft reports presented at the Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development suggests that:

- the greening of **direct payments** is not sufficient to guarantee that the most basic steps are put in place to make EU agriculture more sustainable.
- ring-fencing of 30% of the **rural development** funding for agri-environment-climate and organic farming measures strengthens the Commission's proposals is essential.
- proposals for the **single market organisation** do not go far enough to ensure fair and cost-covering prices for farmers. Concrete instruments other than intervention and export subsidies are needed that prevent overproduction and subsequent price slumps in EU agricultural markets.
- proposals on **financing and monitoring** fall short to finally address measures to protect water resources under cross compliance and seek to sever the link between greening and basic payments.

On the basis of these reports, **serious improvements must be made** in the upcoming weeks to ensure that Europe's food and farming policy can deliver significant steps towards sustainability by 2020. Véronique Rebholtz added:

“The lack of ambition among the EU Parliament's lead rapporteurs, clearly shows the time has come for EU citizens and taxpayers to stand up and demand that their representatives deliver a reform that increases the environmental performance of European farming and long-term viability rural areas.”

Across Europe mobilisation has already started for what is hoped will be the largest civil society action ever seen on the CAP. The **GOOD FOOD MARCH 2012** – initiated by ARC2020, European Coordination Via Campesina, European Milk Board, Friends of the Earth Europe, IFOAM EU Group, Meine Landwirtschaft, Groupe PAC2013 and Slow Food – will take place this summer (2). It will see people from across Europe make their way to Brussels – by bike, tractor or any other means – to deliver their demands for the CAP directly to the European institutions. Find out more on the official website launched today: www.goodfoodmarch.eu

ENDS

1 Progress Report of the Danish EU Presidency, presented in the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on June 18th: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st08/st08949.en12.pdf>

Draft reports presented on June 18th and 19th in the European Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/agri/draft-reports.html>

2 Call to Action released May 2012 <http://www.arc2020.eu/front/2012/06/good-food-march-2012-call-for-action/>