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Dairy protestors back on the streets of Europe

News | 14 July, 2009

By Jack Davies

THOUSANDS of dairy farmers gathered on the streets of Strasbourg this morning (Tuesday, July 14) to call on the president of the EU Parliament to take action to help the beleaguered dairy sector.

Protesting against low prices and the deregulation of the milk market, the producers called on newly-elected president Jerzy Buzuk to immediately freeze five per cent of the milk quota.



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Mr Buzuk, the former Prime Minister of Poland, was voted in by MEPs today as they got down to business in the first session since the Parliamentary elections last month.

His election was greeted by protests – organised by the European Milk Board (EMB) and European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC) – outside the Parliament building in Strasbourg ahead of talks between MEPs and the two organisations.

Romuald Schaber, president of the EMB said: "The existing European control of volumes has to be supplemented with a mechanism that enables supply to be adjusted every year.

"It should be possible to lower or raise the volume of milk according to market demand. The yardstick has to be the achievement of a cost-covering price paid to producers."

The latest protest follow a series of similar events staged in Brussels last month, as tens of thousands of farmers gathered to put their message across to EU agriculture Ministers.

Speakers at the demonstrations said milk producers were 'at the end of their tether' and called for robust and transparent price mechanisms, warning many dairy farmers are close to quitting as milk prices continue to fall short of production costs.

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