



PRESS RELEASE

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Dairy crisis: European Coordination Via Campesina supports the producers' strike and calls for complementary actions.

The dairy crisis continues to worsen in the European Union. The inertia and absence of political will of governments and the European commission generate anger and despair among producers¹. In this context, a milk strike has been launched today in France by the European Milk Board.

European Coordination Via Campesina supports and will support the producers in their strike.

- It calls farmers organizations to blocking dairies, dried milk factories, as well as storage centres for milk powder (to prevent the strike being broken by selling excess stock)
- It calls consumers to support producers in claiming a farm gate price for milk which recognizes the value of their work and for a limit to be put on the margins between production and consumer prices.
- It calls on taxpayers to refuse that the EU budget be used to export dairy products at prices below production costs (dumping) - which ruin local dairy production in Southern countries.

This disastrous dairy policy is responsible for the current situation of overproduction: it needs to be changed, as we have proposed over the last months. First, production has to be reduced by the percentage necessary to balance the market and increase prices for producers. This must be done proportionally to the volume of production per producer and to number of people active on the farm, protecting employment and meaning small producers do not undergo reductions.

A European debate should then be launched on modes of dairy production. With just a few months until the climate conference in Copenhagen, the EU can no longer defend an intensive model of dairy production based on imported soy from Latin America, processed into a surplus of butter and dried milk. This dependence not only makes the EU vulnerable on strategic level, but it also goes hand in hand with environmental and social damage in Latin America as much as in Europe.

The EU does not have the right to bet on the resignation of the producers. It can and must solve this crisis quickly. It must change dairy policy to obtain economic, social, environmental, and international legitimacy - necessary to face the immense challenges which await us.

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¹ See our open letter to EU from 9/1st and our PR of 9/8th – www.eurovia.org