

Dear dairy farmers, dear interested parties,

The year is coming to an end.

We would like to take this opportunity to look back at our journey in 2018.

The year presented us dairy farmers with some challenges as the dairy market still lacks effective instruments. Together with our members – milk producers from 15 European countries – we have tackled many of them head-on and achieved some of our goals, but we still have a long way to go.

In this festive season, I would like to thank everyone who has actively supported us along the way.

Thank you to all our colleagues within the EMB who have made our progress possible, have always provided new motivation for further developments and have helped us move forward.

Thank you to all policy-makers who have not only listened to our concerns but have also taken concrete steps toward the implementation of legislative measures.

Thank you to all fellow activists who fight with us shoulder to shoulder and add their voice to the call for a fair dairy sector.

And last but not least a **big thank you to citizens and consumers**, who appreciate our work in favour of a fair milk price and a fair income for us dairy farmers, so that we can pass our farms on to our children!

On behalf of the European Milk Board, I would like to wish you and your families a relaxing and peaceful Christmas season. May the coming days be a period of calm that will allow us to focus on what is important and gather strength to strive toward our goals for next year.

Season's Greetings and a Happy New Year!

Erwin Schöpges, President of the European Milk Board

Here's a recap of 2018 – Please find below a review of some important events in 2018.

EMB 2018: Year in review

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- You can find us on Facebook

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„We call for a responsible milk policy“

Brussels, 13/12/2018

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"4000 km and 6 days in the bus there and back: "Dear Heads of State, there needs to be fairness in the Common Agricultural Policy at last!"

The Lithuanian Milk Producers' Association (LPGA) demonstrated in the European quarter in Brussels to demand harmonised direct payments within the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Equal treatment and a fair CAP was the motto of the alliance of Baltic Farmers, supported by umbrella organisation European Milk Board (EMB). Their demands are directed at the EU heads of state and government, who discussed the EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027, and thus the future of agricultural funding at the summit in Brussels.

Black Forest, 20 and 21 November 2018

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What happened in the Black Forest?

The Danish farmer met with his German, Lithuanian, French, Italian, Latvian, Belgian, Irish (these are a lot of different nations, but let's continue...), Luxembourgish, Norwegian, Swiss and Dutch colleagues. For the milk market needs to be reformed! There was a lot to be discussed **at EMB General**

Assembly.

End of October – Africa

EMB President Erwin Schöpges (Fairebel, Belgium) together with his colleague Adrien Lefèvre (FaireFrance, France) visited Burkina Faso to learn more about the situation in this West African country!

© Adrien Lefèvre

Milk cost study showed: There is a gap between production costs and producer prices

Brussels, 10/10/2018

Overview published with the latest figures from France, Germany, Denmark, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands

The results of the latest milk production cost calculations in six European countries show in objective economic terms – black on white – that daily business for milk producers is grim: milk production costs and farm-gate prices are moving further apart! Even in so-called 'good years', i.e. between dairy crises, prices are permanently below production costs.

According to the latest study by the Bureau for Rural Sociology and Agriculture (BAL) – *What is the cost of producing milk?* – the average milk production cost over 5 years in six European countries was between 41 and 46 cents per kilogram of milk. However, producer prices during the same period were on an average between 32 and a maximum 35 cents per kilogram of milk. "European milk producers are squarely in the red every month," says study author Dr. Karin Jürgens, hitting the nail on the head. "If this dilemma is not solved, it will become increasingly difficult for dairy farmers – both large and smaller ones – to continue to produce milk in Europe."

In 2017, production costs in all six countries inclusive of remuneration and average net investments were significantly higher than milk prices and were between 43.39 cents/kg (Germany) and 48.89 cents/kg (Luxembourg). And even without taking into account the necessary net investments, the average cost shortfall over 5 years is significant and between 14% (Denmark) and 27% (Belgium and France).

[Please find the cost study here](#)

Demonstration 28/09/2018 in Luxembourg

Members, supporters and milk producers of the Luxembourg Dairy Board (LDB) demonstrated with their tractors on Place Clairefontaine in the city centre of Luxembourg. Their objective was to present the new study on milk production costs and then to submit their demands to the Minister of Agriculture.

@ LDB

"Non, je ne regrette rien..."

© André Lefranc

September 2018

Marilo Hurel, French dairy farmer, remembers the milk strike nine years ago.

"Non, je ne regrette rien..."

"I regret nothing"; that's exactly how I feel about having taken part in the milk strike;

proud to have done it, happy to never regret that I didn't try everything;

fully aware that this was our best way to rally support (unlike burning tires in front of the prefectures!),

but so disillusioned with my profession...

when we know that a 3-day general strike would have brought the dairies to their knees.

Two years ago I made the toughest decision of my life: to stop producing milk.

I still haven't got over the loss of my herd.

It was months before I could set foot in my empty, silent cowshed.

I am also empty, even though I think I made the right decision.

Those 14 days of milk strike were tough but rewarding;

tough having to pour milk from my cows, the product of my labour, down the drain, throwing food away, but rewarding because of the enthusiasm, solidarity and openness that I finally found with the other strikers.

As Edith Piaf sang, "I regret nothing, not a single thing".

Federal Chancellor Merkel visits dairy farmer

July 2018

© BDM

Angela Merkel listened, but will she also support the needed crisis management instrument? In July German Chancellor Merkel visited the farm of Ursula Trede, member of the EMB-Organisation BDM.

Study shows success of the EU volume reduction scheme announced 2 years ago

© pixabay

Brussels, 19/07/2018

Two years ago – on 18 July 2016 – European Commissioner for Agriculture Phil Hogan announced the EU volume reduction scheme for the dairy market. The measure was a great success and showed that even small reductions

have a major effect on producer prices.

A study by A. Fink-Keßler and A. Trouvé examined the EU volume reduction scheme. Here are the main findings of the study:

- The voluntary volume reduction scheme was a **great success: with a small reduction in production, a great price effect was achieved;**
- **Direct effect on milk prices:** prices increased from 25.68 cents/kg (07/2016) to 34.16 cents/kg (07/2017);
- **48,200 milk producers from 27 EU Member States** took part (approx. 3% of all European dairy farms);
- Reduced volume: **833,551t (approx. 2% of the milk volume of the same period in the previous year);**
- The 4 largest milk-producing countries showed the highest participation in the programme: **Germany** (232,300 tonnes), **France** (152,732 tonnes) and the **United Kingdom** (90,814 tonnes). Together, these three countries account for 57% of the total reduction volume. The **Netherlands** reduced by 56,117 tonnes;
- **Ireland** had the highest percentage of participating farms (21%) and reduction volume (4%).

Background: The EU milk volume reduction scheme ran from October 2016 to January 2017. Farmers were given the opportunity to voluntarily reduce their production volume in exchange of a compensation (14 cents per kilogram of reduced milk compared to the same 3-months period of the previous year).

The programme has marked a turning point in Europe's dairy policy. With the volume reduction programme, the European Commission has finally provided dairy farmers with an efficient instrument. It is now important that a crisis instrument is firmly anchored in the new CAP so that production volumes can be adjusted in times of crisis, as provided for in the EMB Market Responsibility Programme.

Analysis of the EU volume reduction programme 2016/17

Here you can watch a short video on the study

Fair – Fairer – Faironika

Lille, 14/06/2018

@ EMB

European Fair Milk Conference honoured responsible commitment in agricultural sector

And the Golden Faironika goes to...

At the awards ceremony at the Fair Milk Conference in Lille, seven charming golden cows were given to engaged citizens and institutions for their positive contribution to sustainable dairy farming. For example, the European Committee of the Regions was one of the recipients for their responsible work in the dairy sector. In addition, journalists, representatives from processing and retail and, of course, farmers as well were thanked for investing their heart and soul in their work, with a special focus on fairness.

The conference clearly showed that the committed members are the driving force of the European Fair Milk project. Therefore, one of the surprise recipients of a Golden Faironika 2018 was Jean-Luc Pruvot himself, who is not only the President of FaireFrance, but also a committed dairy farmer. He has contributed significantly to the success of fair milk in France with his commitment, dedication and passion. The Belgian Alain Minet – known to consumers from innumerable tastings at supermarkets and fairs – has worked tirelessly for fair milk in recent years and was also honoured with a Golden Faironika for his valuable contribution.

April 2018: Elections at the EMB

Erwin Schöppes got elected as the new EMB President in April of this year. Sieta van Keimpema remains Vice President and, together with Kjartan Poulsen, Roberto Cavaliere and Boris Gondouin, is part of the well-established team. New members of the Executive Committee are Pat McCormack (ICMSA, Ireland) and Johannes Pfaller (BDM, Germany). Romuald Schaber and John Comer stepped down after many years of commitment.

Visit to EU milk powder storage facility

Herstal, 24/01/2018

© EMB

To get an idea of what many thousand tons of intervention milk powder look like, EU policy-makers and members of the EMB Executive Board visited the Belgian milk powder storage facility Vincent Logistics in Herstal in January 2018. It was stacked with milk powder sacks amounting to 12,600 tons, which were awaiting further use.

As the EMB made clear, intervention is not a full-fledged crisis instrument that can keep a chronically unstable market in check. The overflowing storage facilities clearly show that intervention is not appropriate as a permanent crisis instrument.

The EMB is advocating for a crisis management instrument that is part of the CAP and can counteract chronic market instabilities. This instrument should monitor the market and react to crisis risks associated with current production conditions by activating measures like voluntary production cuts.

Considering the 12,600 tons of milk powder in this storage facility in Wallonia alone, the shortcomings of the current Common Agricultural Policy became more than clear to the dairy farmers and EU policy-makers present.

You can find us on Facebook

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