

Dear Dairy Farmers and Interested Parties,

I would like to introduce myself briefly. My name is Paul de Montvalon and I'm a dairy farmer from Angers in western France. My family runs a 90-hectare farm with a milk quota of 350,000 litres. As Richard Blanc has expressed the wish to focus totally on the development of Fair Milk (FaireFrance) in France in the future, I'll be deputising for him in his role as a member of the EMB Board.

I started off in 2009 on the Board of APLI, then I joined the inter-branch organisation Office du Lait, and am currently President of the France Milkboard producer organisation. I am firmly convinced that there is no alternative to a European organisation to stand up for the rights of milk producers. It is only possible to come up with a solution on a European level to the milk producers' dramatic situation. That is why we have to support the EMB's work and, by fighting on both a national and European level, ensure that the free-market liberals' and speculators' way of thinking does not prevail. In the milk producers' view the world market is just a sham. We must no longer accept being constantly abused as the dairy industry's reserve army.

Only the EMB champions a milk price that covers costs and gives the producers a fair wage. To this end it is indispensable that a European monitoring agency be set up, as called for by the EMB. Moreover, we should never cease to promote the continual publication of the real costs of milk production in Europe and the pooling of milk producers – first in each country and then on an EU level. We must be relentless in pointing out the dominant market position of the co-operatives and the threat to food security and food sovereignty in Europe.

For me personally one thing is clear: I do not want to live on bonuses or subsidies, but solely on the proceeds of selling the milk produced on my family farm. That is the aim of my commitment to the EMB

I wish you a merry christmas and all the best for the new year.

Paul de Montvalon (President of France Milkboard and deputy EMB Board member)

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EMB meets for general assembly in Hamburg

On 26 and 27 November 2013, the EMB held its second Members' Meeting this year in the Hanseatic city of Hamburg in Germany. At the meeting the European member organisations deliberated on how the political work was to proceed further following the reform of the EU Common Market Organisation and the big dairy farmers' conference last September.

Although the results of the CAP reform that were recently adopted, rejecting instruments like the voluntary suspension of production, failed to come up to the European dairy farmers' expectations, the representatives of the EMB member organisations at the meeting were agreed that the EMB had reached a crucial stage in its political work.

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MIG/ FMB: Call to the big demonstration in Brussels on 19 December

The crisis in the dairy sector, with milk prices not covering costs, is only a small part of a much larger crisis that affects each and every citizen. In Belgium alone, everywhere we look we see the entire production sector in a bad state: Caterpillar, Ford, ArcelorMittal. Add to that the crisis with thousands of billions of euros lost because of the banks' dubious speculation, for which the politicians now want us to pay through endless austerity programmes. New projects like the planned transatlantic trade agreements are only taking

this madness to extremes.

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Faire Milch starts in Italy: a dream comes true!

The Fair Milk project was officially launched in Italy under the name Buono e Onesto (Good and Fair) in Milan on 28 November. In future the Italian EMB member organisation APL della Pianura Padana intends to market dairy products under this label bearing the logo of a cow in the Italian national colours. The range is to start off with liquid milk and expand later with cheese and yoghurt.

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No ease-up for German milk producers despite slightly lower milk production costs

The following extracts from the EMB's and MEG-Milch Board's press releases appeared on 2 December 2013 along with the publication of the latest figures from the study on milk production costs in Germany.

EMB press release

Compared to April this year, the cost of milk production in Germany dropped by about 1 cent in July 2013 to reach a value of 42 cents/ kg milk . At the same time, the average milk price amounted to 38,55 cents/ kg milk. This means that there is still a gap of 3,45 cents between the farm-gate price and production costs.

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Over 50 civil society groups demand a paradigm shift in EU trade and investment policies

On 26 November 2013 in Brussels, a European alliance of over 50 civil society organisations – one of them the European Milk Board - launched the Alternative Trade Mandate, a proposal to make EU trade and investment policy work for people and the planet, not just the profit interests of a few. The launch took place as EU trade ministers and the European Commission were leaving for the World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations in Bali the following week.

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EMB Calendar

Please find below some of the most important events in December 2013:

- 10.12.: Meeting of the working group on milk pooling in Brussels
- 12.12.: NGO workshop on EU-US free trade agreement (TTIP) in Brussels
- 18.12.: Board meeting in Brussels

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