

Dear Dairy Farmers and Interested Parties,

The crisis in the European milk market is back. That is the situation we are experiencing first hand and which is evident from a glance at neighbouring farms. How long the crisis will last and when prices will bottom out is anyone's guess.

However, the report recently presented to the European Parliament by MEP Michel Dantin on the future organisation of European agriculture, and the reactions of the MEPs, hold out some hope. The report contains some important proposals such as the introduction of a crisis mechanism with a cut in production or a European instrument for monitoring food prices. This is proof that our huge efforts in the EMB since the last crisis in 2008 and 2009 have been worth it. What we have to do now is stay on the ball and join our forces.

The EMB's opinion is as clear as ever: the European Commission's soft landing by 2015 means a crash landing in just three years. There is an urgent need for action above the intervention level of 21.5 cents. That can be put into practice only with a cut in production, which is best achieved by a voluntary suspension of milk supply. The good initiatives in Michel Dantin's report must therefore be grasped and further developed in the next few weeks and months in conjunction with the policy-makers, constructively but also resolutely.

Our demonstration on 10 July outside the European Parliament in Brussels is a first step in this direction and is intended to pile on the pressure on the decision-makers in the EU. So I call on you to actively join in and demonstrate alongside dairy farmers from every member state outside the European Parliament on 10 July. It is up to us to take the opportunities to improve the situation and to make sure our voice is heard in Brussels.

Romuald Schaber (President of the EMB)

EMB Newsletter July 2012

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Agricultural market organisation: major decisions soon to be taken in Brussels

The milk crisis is back again and milk producers all over Europe are suffering from it. With this scenario a further step in the reform process on the future organisation of the EU agricultural market comes at the right moment.

In the course of the next few months the European Parliament will be adopting its own proposal on the Common Agricultural Policy. They are working at full stretch on this and the dairy farmers should be constructively involved in this process. Advantage must be taken of the opportunities that present themselves here for producers with regard to improving the milk market situation. The new market organisation is part of the present reform of the CAP on a European level.

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The milk producers' demo outside the European Parliament

The European Milk Board (EMB) is calling on its members to demonstrate outside the European Parliament in Brussels in the morning of 10 July 2012. Farm-gate prices for milk are plummeting throughout Europe, and no dairy farmer can cope with the crisis on his/her own. That is why the milk producers in Europe should take the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in the European Parliament as an opportunity to gather in Brussels and show the politicians that the situation cannot go on like this. This is the EMB's call for a

major demonstration:

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Shift in direction of the French Dairy Farmers' Association

The FNPL, the biggest organisation of milk producers in France, wants to champion a Common European Agricultural Policy (CAP) to counter the milk crisis, says its new President Thierry Roquefeuil. This shift in direction surprises the French EMB member organisation APLI and the Office du Lait, as previously these two organisations were alone in advocating this position on both a French and European level.

For instance, in future the FNPL wishes to acknowledge the importance of the milk crisis in 2009, which hit all milk producers in Europe equally hard. Moreover, just like the APLI the FNPL is calling for the future of milk production to be secured throughout France, and not just in individual regions.

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The dairy industry in Latvia: the family's broad back

It is possible that the warm afternoon sun helps give Signe Seile's farm near the Latvian capital city of Riga an almost idyllic appearance: flowers everywhere, a tabby cat with white paws stretching in the green grass of spring, ducklings and chicks crowding around their feathered mothers in small pens

But the situation of dairy farmer Seile, whose 27 cows produce 170 000 – 190 000 litres of milk a year, is far from ideal. The blonde farmer describes the situation on the farm as follows: "In the last few years work has piled up, but our income has kept on decreasing.

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Uncertainty among Russian dairy farmers about Russia's accession to the WTO

The members of the Russian milk producer organisation Souzmoloko feel that the rise in imports of dairy products after Russia's accession to the WTO could mean a real risk for the sector. They are worried, especially about the Russian retailers. They fear that the retailers will import more and more cheap milk powder and palm oil products from Europe if the Russian markets are opened up further in the future. They say the Russian retailers are entering into fewer contracts with milk producers and waiting until such time as there are unrestricted imports.

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EMB Calendar

Please find below some of the most important events in July 2012:

- 09.7.: Special meeting of the EMB Board in Brussels
- 09.7.: Advisory Group Milk in Brussels
- 10.7.: Demonstration of milk producers in front of the European Parliament in Brussels
- 13.7.: Conference on the future of the CAP in Brussels
- 31.7.: Meeting of the EMB Board in Brussels

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