

## Dear Dairy Farmers and Interested Parties,

The election of the Members of the European Parliament is over and there will be a change in approach, both for the European Parliament and for EMB representatives. You can read an article on the election results in this newsletter.

An issue that will have to be focused on a lot more is the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership between the EU and the US, known in short as the TTIP free trade agreement. Up until now negotiations have been held behind closed doors, and although the fifth round of negotiations is already over, neither the people nor the parliamentarians know much of its content besides some 'leaked' documents.

Hormones for meat and milk production, the use of animal medication forbidden in the EU, the almost complete lack of animal welfare standards – these are all common practice in the US. And what about the absence of the precautionary principle in the US, by which we protect our consumers in the EU? EU policymakers try to have us believe they will make sure our food stays hormone-free, safe and up to EU standards. Today already dairy products from the US are crossing our borders, produced with the help of milk-stimulating hormones. We will sink to the lowest standards or will have an enormous distortion of competition.

The loss of border protection will disrupt our rural areas because price pressure will increase concentration in the dairy market and will cause family farms to disappear.

Farmers are no supermen, they cannot defy gravity, nor can they produce at higher costs and still hold their position in the market. That is how the market works: a simple survival of the fittest. And, in the eyes of our policymakers, retailers and trade companies, being competitive means nothing more than being the cheapest.

An EU-US trade deal means the loss of our democratic right to decide how we produce our food, who will produce it and where, so in fact corporate domination over food democracy. That is something we, as citizens, farmers and members of the EMB cannot accept. To the TTIP we say: No, thank you.

*Sieta van Keimpema (Vice President of the EMB)*

### EMB Newsletter June 2014

- [European elections in turbulent times](#)
- [Farmers are the losers in the abolition of quotas](#)  
The Brussels authorities want to
- [silence opposition to the "Transatlantic Agreement" \(TTIP\)](#)  
Current figures: farm-gate price
- [still cannot cover costs of production](#)
- [Campaigns of action for World Milk Day](#)  
[EMB Calendar](#)

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## European elections in turbulent times

Against the backcloth of economic crises and widespread disenchantment with the project for a unified Europe, from 22 to 25 May the citizens of the EU Member States voted for their candidates vying for the 751 seats in the European Parliament in Strasburg. The low turn-out all across Europe of only about 43 per cent, and the electoral success of numerous parties which essentially oppose Europe, once again clearly demonstrated that at present the EU holds out no concrete solutions for the tough situation many people live in, and that the concept of Europe is not winning the hearts and minds of people in Europe.

source: wiki commons

In the end there were no major surprises in the elections, the outcome of which was as had been predicted by the media.

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## Farmers are the losers in the abolition of quotas

source: Martin Haab

*The following interview with Martin Haab, President of the Swiss EMB member organisation BIG-M, was published on the [www.schweizerbauer.ch](http://www.schweizerbauer.ch) website on 6 May. Five years after the end of the milk quotas in Switzerland, Martin Haab draws a negative conclusion and predicts a similarly unsatisfactory development for the abolition of quotas in the EU next year. The*

*EMB study referred to in the article will be officially published shortly.*

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## The Brussels authorities want to silence opposition to the “Transatlantic Agreement” (TTIP)

*The following press release was published on 16 May by the Alliance D19-20 – in which the Belgian EMB member organisations MIG and FMB are actively involved – subsequent to a demonstration on the occasion of this year's "European Business Summit" in Brussels.*

source: EMB

On Thursday morning, 15 May, more than 1,000 people took to the streets of Brussels for a peaceful protest against austerity and the planned transatlantic agreement discussed behind closed doors at the European Business Summit.

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## **Current figures: farm-gate price still cannot cover costs of production**

Taking the EMB's cost study as its basis, the MEG Milch Board developed the Milk Marker Index (MMI), which documents the ongoing course of production costs (base year 2010 = 100). The MMI for January 2014 is 109 points. It is published quarterly with a price-cost ratio, which shows the relation between the officially recorded farm-gate prices and the costs of milk production.

agricultural sociology BAL.

In Germany the milk price in January 2014 of 41.46 cents a kilo of milk was about 4 cents below the production costs of 45.16 cents a kilo, according to the latest cost study carried out by the German office for agriculture and

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## **Campaigns of action for World Milk Day**

World Milk Day is held every year on 1 June to publicise internationally the consumption of milk. It was initiated by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations and the International Dairy Federation (IDF) and is organised the world over. Campaigns and press events relating to the subject of milk are organised in numerous member countries of the EMB, primarily addressing consumers and publicising milk as a food. This year in various countries, e.g. Austria, the focus is also on the end of the milk quota system in 2015.

source: IG-Milch

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## EMB Calendar

These are some of the EMB Board's key dates in June 2014:

- 03.06: TTIP discussion with civil society at the Directorate-General for Trade
- 03.06: EMB Milk pooling meeting in Brussels
- 18.06: Meeting with the Directorate-General for Agriculture on the calculation of costs (EMB full-cost study)
- 23.06: Meeting with the French Ministry of Agriculture in Paris

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