

Dear Dairy Farmers and Interested Parties,

A threatened species! That is what has become of us, the independent milk producers.

For our politicians – elected by the people but controlled by the world of finance – are we a species that must be saved? Certainly not in the eyes of the representatives of unfettered capitalism, whose dream is to be able to drive us beggars off our land. A return to the Middle Ages: Is that the future that awaits us?

In my native land, France, we are lucky enough to still have a few protective mechanisms that keep the tsunami at bay – such as the tenant farming regulations or the pre-emptive right. But for how long will we still have them?

Yet we are an irreplaceable species on which the entire economy is constructed! What can we do, though, for our species to survive? When you see the growing number of farmers that are giving up their dairy farms to grow cereals, the alarm bells must start ringing. Even if it is hardly surprising, really: one hectare of wheat means just under four hours' of work to produce eight tons; whereas one cow means 30 to 40 hours' work to produce eight tons of milk – for the same turnover!

But the worst thing for our species is undoubtedly that it is becoming older and older. It is 50+ years old on average, and the young generation wants nothing to do with a profession that has no future. All these figures speak for themselves and are testimony to the disappearance of the independent milk producer.

That is precisely why we must stand shoulder to shoulder and fight – alongside every dairy farmer in the EMB's big European family. Let us demonstrate together outside the European Parliament **in Brussels on 26 and 27 November**. It's now or never! For one thing is certain: if we don't become active ourselves the struggle is lost from the outset and tomorrow we're the serfs of the food industry.

If you don't ask, you don't get. Our future is entirely in our hands!

Richard Blanc (Member of the EMB Board)

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Newsletter as PDF

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1000 tractors to Brussels!

Huge demonstration of European dairy farmers outside the European Parliament in Brussels on 26/27 November

Dear fellow farmers,

We, the farmers of the European Milk Board, will be demonstrating outside the European Parliament in Brussels on 26 and 27 November. We call on every dairy farmer to be there and actively support our common aim – flexible supply management to achieve cost-covering farm-gate prices. It is vital that we turn up in Brussels in large numbers. Bring your tractors along! We want to make an impression.

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Members' Meeting in Croatia gives decisive boost to big demo in Brussels

The second EMB Members' Meeting this year was held in Tuhelj Toplice, Croatia, from 23 to 25 October. Those attending took the opportunity to discuss in depth the drastic milk market situation in Europe, and to draw from the warm encounter with European friends and colleagues new strength for future campaigns of action.

The focal issue of this Members' Meeting was what are known as the transformation countries in Eastern and Southeast Europe. The climax was an international milk conference entitled "Milk production in Croatia: opportunities and risks of joining the EU". With factual presentations and a lively exchange of opinions, this conference provided a comprehensive overview of the situation in the Eastern European milk markets and pointed up ways for a successful start of the Croatian dairy farmers in the EU. Besides many fellow farmers from Croatia, representatives of Polish and Latvian milk producer organisations had also been invited.

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FFA Red Light for UDF Management at AGM

Please find below the press release of Farmers for Action (FFA) about a protest on Thursday, 18th October.

Farmers For Action UK NI mounted a protest at United Dairy Farmers annual general meeting last Thursday night in Cookstown. Leaflets were given out to UDF members at the hotel entrance.

FFA UK Chairman David Handley stated that "UDF Management are the one of the larger processors' in the UK unwilling to talk to or co-operate with FFA! It beggars to question what have they got to hide, yet they expect to take large GB cheese orders at their farmer members' expense by poor returns in their milk cheques, something that FFA will not tolerate!"

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Appeal to the French President

The French EMB member organisation APLI wrote a letter to François Hollande, the President of France, drawing his attention to the urgent crisis in French agriculture and in Brittany in particular.

Dear Mr President,

When you visited the international livestock trade fair SPACE in Rennes, you took a position on the future of French agriculture. You stated your express intention to sell our products with added value throughout the world to guarantee a trade surplus that is substantially lacking at the moment.

For a long time French agriculture generated trade surpluses thanks to the farms' increasing productivity. For decades farmers strove to implement environmental regulations and observe directives on animal welfare.

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Croatian milk producers go on strike

Thousands of dairy farmers went on a milk strike in Croatia from 22 to 25 October. The strike was organised by a group of milk producers opposed to the incumbent Croatian government. The farmers themselves say that 80 per cent of the milk producers joined in the strike, whilst the government puts the figure at just 8 per cent.

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EMB Calendar

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

- 14.11.: Meetings with MEPs in Brussels
- 14.11.: Meeting with Latvian milk producers at the Eurotier fair in Hannover, Germany
- 19.11.: Press conference about milk producers demonstration in Brussels
- 21.11.: Meeting with the Estonian minister for agriculture in Tallinn
- 26./27.11.: Big milk producers demonstration in Brussels

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