

News Details

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Belgian agricultural minister asks European colleagues to find solution for milk crisis

He addresses them in the following letter

Dear Minister,
Esteemed Colleague,

The European milk sector is undergoing an unprecedented crisis.

Because of the collapse in the milk price, dairy farmers throughout Europe are in dire straits.

In the last meeting of the Council of Agriculture and Fisheries, many member states wanted the Commission's initial market support measures to be reinforced. The Commission decided that these measures were enough and that a waiting period was required until their impact was fully evident.

That was two months ago. In spite of the measures, it must be stated that the milk prices have not picked up.

There are no signs from the market of short-term or medium-term improvement in prospects. If prices stay at the same level, large numbers of producers will abandon dairy farming – unless we take steps.

The only way to alter this situation is to reduce supply. In March, several delegations were in favour of blocking the increase in quota. This measure is no longer enough to counter the falling trend in milk prices. Only a general decrease of the European quota by 1-2% can reduce supply and send out a clear signal to the market.

I therefore propose convening an urgent meeting of the Council of Ministers to take appropriate measures to put an end to the crisis in the milk sector.

Hoping to be able to count on your support in this joint approach to the European Commission, I ask you to accept, dear Minister, esteemed colleague, my respectful regards,
Benoît Lutgen

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