News Details

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ECVC: There is not an excess of producers, but an excess of production!

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Milk: European Commission proposals

No to the plan to eradicate producers!

There is not an excess of producers, but an excess of production!

Facing the anger and the distress of milk producers - for whom destroying their production is an extreme act - the European Commission did not find anything better yesterday than to propose eliminating the most fragile dairy exploitations.

The last few decades of permanent restructuring of European agriculture (and fisheries) have shown that this is not the way to rebalance markets and resources. The same level of production has become concentrated in much fewer farms – and is increasingly large and increasingly industrialized - the opposite of the model we need to implement for Copenhagen.

There are not too many producers, but too much milk. What is needed is supply management – regulating production through:

- non marketable rights to produce that the EU can adapt to market needs,
- more sustainable modes of production,
- tariffs, legitimised by an abandonment of any form of dumping (exporting at prices below the production costs).

The European Coordination Via Campesina demands a mandatory penalty for exceeding quota and not left to the choice of the Member States. This must go hand in hand with a remunerative milk price and a fairer distribution of quotas. The funds from the penalties should not be used for restructuring, but on the contrary to help small and middle size dairy farms to be maintained.

The Commissioner proposes to divert the sums allocated by the health check to “new challenges” in dairy restructuring. This makes no sense with Copenhagen fast approaching: climatic, energy and biodiversity challenges must be the political priorities.

The proposal to pass from public regulation to private management of the crisis in the form of developing new contracts between industry and producers is another gift to the milk industry: it will benefit a minority of large producers, to whom the industry will offer the best contracts.

The transparency of the margins between production and distribution, and their limitation are vital: we have seen very clearly during last years who benefits from price volatility.

The proposal of a dairy futures market is a dangerous idea. The financial crisis clearly illustrated the dangers of speculation. One does not gamble with food.

The EU is wrong to play with fire and attempt to exploit the possible tensions between producers: citizens understand that milk must be paid at its right value and produced sustainably.

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