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EMB very critical of problematic Mercosur deal

The European Milk Board (EMB) has expressed strong reservations regarding the free trade agreement between the EU and the Mercosur countries. The umbrella organisation that represents numerous dairy-farmer organisations across Europe views the agreement as a real threat to agriculture and citizens around the globe.

"This deal clearly favours industry, to the detriment of farmers and consumers," says Kjartan Poulsen, EMB President and dairy farmer from Denmark. "The agreement promotes neither social nor environmental sustainability and will only exacerbate the already difficult reality of European farmers." Jobs, income and the basic livelihood of many farmers hangs in the balance.

A central issue with the agreement is the danger of local agricultural production being priced out by cheap imports from South America. "These imports often do not comply with high EU standards - be it in terms of production methods or ingredients," explains Boris Gondouin, French dairy farmer and EMB Vice-President.

The EMB is especially critical of the agreement's incompatibility with the EU's sustainability goals. A lot is being said about climate protection and sustainable agriculture, but, at the same time, these efforts would be undermined by transporting products from the other end of the world. Furthermore, the deal will also have a negative impact on the consolidation of sustainable production methods in the Union. It is clear that this agreement stands in clear contradiction of the EU's goals regarding the reduction of harmful emissions and general environmental protection.

The Mercosur deal will also influence security policy. "Food production is a cornerstone of national security," underlines Kjartan Poulsen. "As the agreement weakens the position of European agriculture and increases the dependence on global markets, it is safe to say that security of supply for citizens and thus national security is called into question."

It is also problematic if the European Commission were to force the final approval in the EU on this far-reaching trade agreement at all costs, and were to weaken democratic processes in the EU as a result. This would be the worst-possible signal at a time when it is of utmost importance to strengthen democratic structures and processes, given the many attacks on democratic values worldwide.

The EMB therefore calls for a trade policy that protects the interests of European farmers and consumers, upholds the principles of environmental and social sustainability, and embodies democratic values instead of ignoring them.

About the European Milk Board asbl (EMB)

The European Milk Board is a European organisation that represents the interests of dairy farmers and strives for socially-sustainable, fair and future-proof milk production in Europe. The organisation calls for policies that ensure the survival of family farms and fair prices.

Contacts:

European Milk Board asbl:

Kjartan Poulsen – EMB President (EN, DK, DE): +45 (0) 212 888 99

Boris Gondouin – EMB Vice-President (FR): +33 (0) 6 79 62 02 99

Silvia Däberitz – Director of EMB (FR, DE, EN): +49 (0) 176 380 98 500

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