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European Milk Board on World Milk Day:

Strengthening producer position must remain top priority - CAP/CMO reforms offer an opportunity to create a fair milk market

On the occasion of World Milk Day on 1 June the European Milk Board (EMB) is reaffirming its central call for sustainably strengthening the position of milk producers in the food chain. For the EMB, it is essential that this goal be consistently pursued and not sidelined by other conflicting interests. Fair and adequate remuneration for dairy farmers is the only way to secure the future of the European dairy sector in the long term and to ensure the supply of high-quality milk products to the population.

"World Milk Day is an important occasion to recognize the hard work of our dairy farmers and, at the same time, to draw attention to the ongoing challenges in the sector," emphasizes EMB President Kjartan Poulsen. "Without the right reforms, the existence of many farms remains under threat. It is high time that politicians create framework conditions that enable cost-covering prices and guarantee that producers are adequately remunerated for their valuable work."

The EMB sees the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Union as a key instrument for improving the producer position. Against this background, the EMB has drawn up concrete reform proposals for the CAP and the Common Market Organisation (CMO), which aim to increase market stability and give farmers a stronger negotiating position.

The EMB's current reform proposals for the CAP/CMO include:

- Integration of crisis instruments that have a preventive effect and are triggered early in the event of market imbalances. The aim is to avoid extreme price fluctuations and losses with instruments like the Market Responsibility Programme.
- Strengthening the collective bargaining power of producers by promoting producer organisations with a pooling limit of 30% across the EU. This is intended to enable farmers to achieve fairer prices vis-à-vis the stronger processors and retailers.
- Introduction of mandatory criteria - such as the prohibition of prices below costs - for fair trading practices along the value chain. This is intended to prevent unfair competition and the exploitation of market power.
- Obligatory contracts with the appropriate clauses to promote fairness between producers and processors.
- Integrating processing cooperatives into this market framework - with all its rights and obligations.

"The current discussions about the future direction of the CAP offer a decisive opportunity to set the course for a more resilient and fairer milk market," Poulsen continued. "It is of paramount importance that policymakers set a clear focus on empowering producers and are not swayed by other interests. The future of the European dairy sector depends on it."

The EMB appeals to policymakers at national and European level to implement these reform proposals in the interest of milk producers. This is the only way to achieve the goal of strengthening the producer position along the chain and to ensure the sustainable production of high-quality milk in Europe in the long term.

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