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European Parliament strengthens producers' interests

A first important step towards fairer markets

This week, with its plenary vote, the European Parliament sent a signal in support of Europe's farmers. A majority of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) voted against harmful amendments pushed by representatives of industrial interests and in favour of a progressive report that continues to pursue the goal of strengthening producers' position in the food supply chain.

This decision prevented key achievements from the process to date from being watered down or deleted. The European Milk Board (EMB) expressly welcomes this outcome, which shows that the Parliament has recognised the importance of fair framework conditions for Europe's farms.

"This is an important and encouraging signal for Europe's farmers," highlights the EMB. "It is good to see that the Parliament has not allowed itself to be swayed by the intense lobbying efforts of industry and remains committed to the goal of a fairer market organisation."

Thanks to this decision, the Parliament's final position contains crucial elements that aim to strengthen producers' position within the chain:

- Obligatory EU-wide contracts to ensure fairer and reliable conditions for producers. Unfortunately, cooperatives remain exempt at their own request, depriving their members of an important factor of stability.
- Price formation based on production costs to ensure the economic survival of farms.
- A revision clause in contracts to be able to react to problematic market developments and conduct new negotiations.

This vote marks a success for farmers' interests – it demonstrates that the path towards a fairer market organisation in the EU is possible when political decision-makers act with determination. However, much remains to be done: the problems are not yet solved, and further important measures will have to be adopted in the future.

With this vote, the European Parliament now enters negotiations with the Council and the Commission, where the final reform will be decided. The EMB sees the Parliament's position as a strong basis for these discussions – even though more ambitious measures would have been desirable to ensure the long-term security of EU food production and its farmers.

The EMB calls on the EU institutions to stay on this course and to implement the reform in a way that genuinely leads to more fairness, stability, and sustainability in European agriculture.

"An important foundation has been laid," states the EMB. "However, there is still a long way to go before truly fair conditions for producers are achieved."

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