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Europe’s family farmers call for a rejection of the EU-Mercosur agreement

Not just corrections, but a new orientation. We need a trade policy that ensures fair, cost-covering prices, protects the environment, and upholds human rights.

In a joint declaration by European farmers, 43 farmer organisations in 14 countries – Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain (incl. Basque Country and Galicia), Switzerland – as well as the umbrella organisations European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC), the European Milk Board (EMB) and Biodynamic Federation – Demeter International call on their respective governments to reject the EU-Mercosur agreement.

This Free Trade Agreement is being contested in some Member States at national level. Clear criticisms have been voiced by Austria, Netherlands, France, Ireland and Belgium. Germany, who currently holds the Council Presidency, announced that it wishes to make progress on the ratification of the EU-Mercosur agreement, even though Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel has recently expressed concerns about the agreement. The fear is that Germany will accommodate the critical countries with small corrections and push them toward ratification.

European farmers call on their governments to reject the EU-Mercosur agreement. As EMB President Erwin Schöpges puts it:

“With the EU-Mercosur agreement, imports of products like meat, sugar and soya from the Mercosur countries are set to increase, which, in turn, will encourage them to adopt a strongly export-oriented, even more industrial production model. The Amazon forest, which is integral to worldwide climate protection and biodiversity, must remain safe from this system. Human rights violations are also a factor that cannot be ignored in the context of such developments. At the same time, family farms in Europe are faced with major challenges to produce foodstuffs that uphold stricter environmental and animal welfare standards, which implies higher production costs. Increased, non-equivalent imports from the Mercosur countries exert an additional price pressure on Europe’s family farms. This trade policy and these unmatched production, environmental and social standards that favour the agro-industry are simply speeding up the disappearance of small-scale farms on either side of the Atlantic.”

The farmers call for a trade policy that promotes fair, cost-covering producer prices across the world, environmental protection, biodiversity and animal welfare, human rights, small-scale farming, regional foodstuffs, the preservation and further development of European standards, and fair working conditions.

Please find here the joint declaration by European farmers

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