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Fair - Fairer - Faironika



European Fair Milk Conference honours responsible commitment in agricultural sector

(Lille, Brussels, 14/06/2018) And the Golden Faironika goes to... At today's awards ceremony at the Fair Milk Conference in Lille, seven charming golden cows were given to engaged citizens and institutions for their positive contribution to sustainable dairy farming. For example, the European Committee of the Regions was one of the recipients for their responsible work in the dairy sector. In addition, journalists, representatives from processing and distribution and, of course, farmers as well were thanked for investing their heart and soul in their work, with a special focus on fairness.

In his laudatory speech, Roberto Cavaliere, EMB Executive Committee member and President of Fair Milk Italy, underlined the important role of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) in determining dairy policy. He highlighted the important debates regarding improved conditions for European dairy farmers, which are a constant feature at the CoR: "The Committee of the Regions already raised the alarm at the end of milk quotas that the EU has no effective instrument in hand to prevent the collapse of milk prices – and they were unfortunately right." For years now, this institution based in Brussels has contributed in the form of concrete proposals to improve the position of dairy farmers, thus proving not only their expertise but their political foresight as well. "The CoR has always insisted that volume must be regulated in order to stave off future crises," continued Cavaliere.

In his speech honouring the winners from processing and distribution, Jean-Luc Pruvot, President of FaireFrance, emphasised that dairy farmers need reliable comrades-in-arms. "Mr Emmanuel Vasseneix, President of the LSDH dairy, has not only been a loyal partner to French fair milk from the very beginning, he has also personally supported us milk producers in our efforts to achieve cost-covering prices." Christian Rodot, member of Leclerc in Chambry and member of the cooperative Scapest, opened the doors of his shops to us in the truest sense of the word and bought the first tanker of Fair Milk, thus paving the way for fairly-produced milk, continued Pruvot.

For the first time, two golden cows were also awarded to members of the press: French journalists Sabine and Bernard Godard were felicitated for their skilled, committed reporting. Dutch agricultural and environmental journalist Geesje Rotgers was also honoured because, in the words of the jury, she took a critical view behind the scenes of milk production and delved deeper into facts and figures with active research.

The conference clearly showed that the committed members are the driving force of the European Fair Milk project. Therefore, one of the surprise recipients of a Golden Faironika 2018 was Jean-Luc Pruvot himself, who is not only the President of FaireFrance, but also a dairy farmer. He has contributed significantly to the success of fair milk in France with his commitment, dedication and passion. The Belgian Alain Minet – known to consumers from innumerable tastings at supermarkets – has worked tirelessly for fair milk in recent years and was also honoured with a Golden Faironika for his valuable contribution.

Erwin Schöpges, President of the EMB, stressed that dairy farmers are actively assuming responsibility for the future of their farms with the Fair Milk project. "Fair Milk products are now being sold in seven countries in Europe. Consumers buying these products are contributing to the participating dairy farmers receiving cost-covering prices. We producers would like to warmly thank our consumers for their support."

Of course, the goal for the EMB and its members from across Europe is making cost-covering prices a reality for all dairy farmers. "We can only go this way together with EU policy-makers, who must implement an effective crisis instrument in the dairy sector," said Schöpges. The Market Responsibility Programme (MRP) would be perfectly suited to bring stability to the sector.

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