

## News Details

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### Germany: Keep at it is the mantra



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It is clear from the implementation of the volume discipline measures included in the 2nd EU aid package: Significant contributions to market stability can be made with minimal red tape. All the necessary information - for the EU as well as the national component - can fit on an A4 sheet and can be provided online. The administrative burden for the necessary controls is very limited. All those who deemed the EMB's Crisis Management Programme unrealistic due to different reasons have now been left red-faced.

About a third of Germany's dairy farmers representing a milk volume of 16.3 billion kg have applied for the ongoing roll-out of the national component of the special aid for milk. This means that mainly larger farms wish to take on temporary volume discipline; 53% of applicants produce more than 1 million kg milk per year. Provisional calculations suggest aid to the tune of 0.70 cents per kg for milk delivered between 1/12/2015 and 30/11/2016.

The evolution of milk deliveries post the volume discipline period remains a key question. Many expect an increase to set in, in spite of the worrisome wave of dairy farmers continuing to give up their activity. Barely a day goes by without news that another one from our ranks has decided to 'drive' the cows from the barn once and for all.

Politicians and associations in Germany are discussing and demanding highly one-sided sectoral solutions. Apparent improvements in contracting, like abolishment of compulsory supply of full production volume and volume control at dairy level are meant to inspire hope that the balance on the EU market can be maintained. Once again, the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture is sending signs that there shall be no more market intervention in the form of volume control measures. A similar line was also adopted with regards to volume discipline before the implementation of the 2nd aid package. However, the Ministry also seems to be threaten that an attitude of refusal by the sector could, nonetheless, lead to governmental action.

In our opinion, political advocacy is our key priority in the coming weeks and months. We have to clearly illustrate that without the introduction of the Dairy Market Crisis Management Programme at EU level, the next dairy market crisis is just a

matter of time. The next important opportunity to drive this point home is the Conference of State Agriculture Ministers, which will take place from March 29 to 31 in Hannover. The BDM will be present and will use impressive photographs to try and show the Ministers what sectoral solutions can and cannot achieve. We will clearly state that the only way to effectively combat crises is an appropriate safety net for the EU dairy market. The incipient campaigning for the Federal elections in autumn 2017 will be used by the BDM to encourage parties and their candidates to take decisive steps to benefit small-scale farming and rural areas.

"Where have the confident, independent farmers gone?" This question was posed by Dr. Robert Habeck, Agriculture Minister of Schleswig-Holstein, at the BDM Dairy Farmers' Conference in Osterrönfeld. Our position is and can only be: Keep at it and don't let yourself be distracted - policymakers must be pushed to act! This is clear to Robert Habeck as well; his question is mainly directed at those dairy farmers who tend to give up in resignation. That is the wrong signal.

*Hans Foldenauer, BDM Germany*

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