

News Details

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International Fair Milk Conference: From Europe to Africa



Fair & committed - milk producers honour responsible efforts with the Golden Faironika

(Libramont, 12/10/2019) The 6th International Fair Milk Conference taking place today is a truly special event: For the first time, dairy farmers from Africa and Europe have come together to celebrate successful projects promoting milk production. By awarding the Golden Faironika, they also expressed special thanks to policy-makers, journalists and colleagues for their exceptional commitment to fairness.

Here you have the Fair Milk *Fairebel* in Belgium, making history for 10 years now with fair milk prices for local dairy farmers. There you have *Fairefaso*, a farmers' milk brand that has been successfully brought on the market by producers in Burkina Faso, in West Africa. Add to that fellow dairy farmers from *Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg* and *Switzerland*, as well as *Mali, Niger, Senegal* and *Chad* who have successfully fostered a strong spirit of solidarity not only with consumers, but with each other as well. All of this is part of the Fair Milk story, which began in Austria in 2006 and is being collectively continued today in Libramont.

Erwin Schöppges, EMB President and person in charge of the Belgian Fair Milk project – the hosts of this year's international conference, is a convinced supporter of the idea as well as its practical implementation. "If as a dairy farmer you see that your own sector and colleagues are constantly under pressure, that economic survival is practically impossible, then you will want to and must take action together. Ten years ago, we decided to join the EMB's Fair Milk project in Belgium. It was a good decision." This decision is bearing fruit and developing further. "We want to act fairly within Europe and beyond as well, which is why we have now started cooperating with *Fairtrade Belgium*. This means that in the future, our chocolate milk drinks will be made from Fair Milk as well as fairly-traded cocoa."

Golden ally

At today's awards ceremony within the context of the Fair Milk Conference, the Golden Faironika – the dairy farmers' award – was presented to citizens and institutions that have made special contributions to fairness and sustainability. The newspaper *Politico* was one of the recipients of this honour for its diligent research and reporting. Member of European Parliament Maria Noichl was awarded this amiable golden cow for her commitment to creating a crisis-proof dairy market. The trophy was presented to Swiss dairy farmer Werner Locher by his colleagues for his tireless political engagement and his strong support for fair, cost-covering milk prices. Former Federal Minister for Agriculture Willy Borsus, who has worked hard to ensure that Belgian dairy producers receive a cost-covering price including a fair income through their membership of *Faircoop*, was also honoured. The Golden Faironika was also awarded to dairy farmers Herman Vissers from Belgium and Adama Ibrahim Diallo from Burkina Faso for their outstanding commitment. The *Luxlait* dairy received the award for being a reliable partner to *Faircoop*, the Belgian Fair Milk cooperative. Lastly, the Golden Faironika was also presented to *Agricall*, an organisation that has supported farmers and their families for years.

According to EMB Vice-President Sieta van Keimpema, the Fair Milk project, and the resulting cooperation between dairy farmers across countries and continents, sends a very important positive message. "Not everyone against everyone, but together *for* something. This is what dairy farmers have put into practice in recent years through Fair Milk as well as through their joint political efforts, and with consumers as well. Striving together *for* cost-covering prices, *for* a decent living for hard-working dairy farmers, has made all of us rise to the occasion." Now it is just up to a few decision-makers at EU level to do the same, to step up and to finally implement the Market Responsibility Programme (MRP) to bring stability to the dairy sector.

[Press release from Fairebel in Dutch](#)

[Press map from Fairebel](#)

[EMB press release in Dutch](#)

[Photos of the conference](#)

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