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Press release: European dairy farmers call for immediate recognition of current crisis and for implementation of public regulation tools for the dairy market

(Brussels, 30/06/2015) On the occasion of the 7th meeting of the Milk Market Observatory, which was taking place in Brussels today, we – the European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC) and the European Milk Board (EMB) – jointly call for an immediate recognition of the current crisis and for the implementation of measures to prevent future crises. These demands follow up on the latest report of the Committee of Regions as well as on observations made in the European Parliament's Nicholson Report. The persistence with which the European Commission maintains its liberalisation policy, regardless of the future of European dairy farmers, seems unacceptable to us.

With the abolition of quotas, a whole range of tools that were at the dairy sector's disposal has been dismantled. Global price volatility causes cyclical crises, resulting in a drop in the number of dairy farmers. The consequent social, environmental and economic consequences strongly impact European territories.

At present, the common organisation of the markets does provide very few regulation and intervention mechanisms for dairy farmers. The existing instruments, adopted through the so-called "milk package", should be reassessed. Their implementation at European scale has to be re-evaluated, given the noticeable developments that have taken place since the end of quotas on 1st April 2015. A concrete risk of a discontinuation of milk collection in Spain, prices below 30 cents per litre in a wide range of countries, continuous loss of jobs in the agricultural sector... a dairy crisis is already happening, here and now!

We – ECVC and EMB – jointly call on European Institutions and the 28 Member States to adopt a fair European dairy policy. We suggest to work together with the institutions on finding a solution to the current crisis and on implementing generally binding volume reduction tools to prevent future crises.

The European Commission needs to recognise the untenable situation of European dairy farmers. The reform jointly called for by our two representative organisations ECVC and EMB also requires a definition of the term "crisis", agreed on EU level, as well as a strengthening of the European Milk Market Observatory's tasks. Both our organisations consider it essential to implement new, additional instruments. The existing tools were not able to prevent the current crisis, nor will they avert future crises.

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