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Press release: European milk producers welcome the approval of voluntary production cuts

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Yesterday in the Strasbourg plenary session the members of the European Parliament voted on the reform of the EU's common organisation of agricultural markets. Despite the strong opposition of the dairy industry and some farmers' unions the introduction of voluntary production cuts prevailed. The setting up of a European monitoring tool for food prices was also decided.

Following the result of the vote, Romuald Schaber, President of the European Milk Board (EMB), the European umbrella organisation for milk producers' associations, explained: "We definitely can consider the Parliament's vote a success for European milk producers. Through the adoption of the system of voluntary production cuts, in spite of the all the resistance from different sides, a step in the right direction was taken. We now have to make sure we continue this way with the objective of a permanent regulation of the EU milk market that goes beyond mere crisis instruments. As a next step, the future European body for the monitoring of food prices should therefore be granted the necessary competencies to assure a flexible regulation of milk supply in the EU. This way, the monitoring tool could significantly contribute to achieve cost-covering milk prices and a secure income for milk producers."

In this sense, European milk producers put a lot of hope in the new legislative measures for the milk market, which were announced by the EU Commissioner in charge of Agriculture, Dacian Cioloș, at the big farmers' demonstration in Brussels end of last year. But until these proposals are on the table, we have to prevent that some member states - above all the German government - reverse this trend. In the trialogue negotiations between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission which are to begin soon the voluntary supply constraint cannot in any case fall prey to the lobbying of the dairy industry.

The European Milk Board (EMB) is a European umbrella organisation representing 19 milk producers' associations from 14 European countries and a total of approximately 100.000 dairy farmers. Around 75% of the milk volume in Europe is produced in its member states.

[<<< back](#)