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Press release: Is the EU getting rid of its dairy farmers?

EMB demands structural measures for the dairy market

(Brussels, 16.11.2015) In light of the Agriculture Council in Brussels, the Executive Committee of the European Milk Board demanded a clear message from policy-makers regarding the EU dairy sector. "Europe's milk producers are languishing, overproduction is destroying prices and dairy farmers," said Romuald Schaber, President of the umbrella organisation for European milk producers, getting to the crux of the matter at today's press conference.

Europe's dairy farmers are calling for structural measures to reign in the crisis. The EMB's Market Responsibility Programme attacks the root of the problem - overproduction, explained Schaber. "We invite the European Commission and the Agriculture Ministers to seriously study and consider our proposal instead of allocating funds to a half-hearted aid package. Good intentions are not enough! We need structural measures to save the European dairy market."

12 November: Europe-wide day of action by dairy farmers

It has been clear for a long time now that this is not a national issue or something to do with small farms that are not economically viable. Under the slogan "Give us our lives back - Market Responsibility Programme now", there were protest actions by milk producers in numerous countries on November 12. One of the major demands by dairy farmers is milk prices that allow them to cover costs. The dairy market is suffering due to structural deficits that cannot be solved by injecting a small amount of money. The funds must be used sensibly to reduce overproduction in the sector.

The EU is responsible for Europe's dairy farmers

According to Article 39 of the TFEU, the objectives of the common agricultural policy shall be "to ensure a fair standard of living for the agricultural community... and to stabilise markets." Why is the European Commission refusing to assume its responsibilities? Are policy-makers consciously letting their dairy farmers die out? Therefore, European milk producers appeal directly and urgently to Agriculture Commissioner Hogan and the Agriculture Ministers: Do your job, so that we can do ours!

We are collectively responsible for our farmers and to make it possible for them to produce our basic food. We in Europe must play our part to ensure that our world does not run off the rails. We have to guarantee farmers their livelihood and we cannot allow producers in developing countries to be displaced either. At the end of the day, this increases poverty and tills the land for violent conflicts. Responsible milk production in the EU is therefore of utmost importance.

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