

News Details

News Details

11.08.2015

Update on protests in Europe (11.08.)

Spain

Protests continue in Spain; our colleagues from Galicia (northern Spain) are no longer talking about a "crisis" but rather about a downright "drama". On August 10, milk producers in northern Spain drew attention to the low milk prices through another action. With a convoy of over 500 tractors, the farmers drove from Aruza to Melida (Galicia), demanding a higher milk price from the government. Further demonstrations should follow.

GALLEGO, the newly-founded platform to defend the dairy sector, has published a manifesto with specific demands addressed to the government regarding Galician milk producers. The farmers have said that they see themselves obliged to continue demonstrating until no effective measures are taken to solve the problems at hand.

Demands in the [fileadmin dokumente press_release emb-allgemein download file](#)>manifesto

1. Collection of the entire volume of milk and break-even milk prices must be ensured;
2. Regional Galician, pasteurised and organically-produced milk must be accorded more value. The misuse of milk as a loss leader in trade must be stopped;
3. The option offered by the milk package regarding the collective bundling of producers to negotiate contracts must be exploited to its fullest;
4. The administration must assume its role as a mediator to ensure that contracts are concluded in line with the law and that both sides are on an equal footing in negotiations;
5. Very important: Consumption must be increased through, for example, school milk programmes that are an opportunity to improve the image of milk and milk products;
6. The law on the supply chain of food products must be enforced better. The issuing of sanctions for violations must be improved.

According to a recent press release by the Spanish member association OPL, this platform to defend the dairy sector is being supported by beef farmers. In their [fileadmin dokumente press_release emb-allgemein download file](#)>press release, OPL demands fair prices for milk and meat. Further tractor actions have been announced for this Wednesday.

Images of the demonstration in Chantada, Galicia

United Kingdom

Falling milk and lamb prices have led to many protests around the country over the last days. Farmers have been protesting in UK supermarkets, despite legal threats from supermarkets. In the night of August 9, about 1,000 farmers gathered at Morrisons depot in Bridgwater, Somerset, while 600 blockaded another in Middlewich, Cheshire on August 6. After these protests, supermarket giant Morrisons agreed to talks on Tuesday 11 August with the National Farmers Union and Farmers for Action (FFA) who led the protests.

- FFA statement on the meeting with Morrisons (August 11)

According to FFA, the meeting with Morrisons was constructive and a step in the right direction towards achieving sustainable prices for British milk producers. Morrisons expressed its support for farmers having their own brand of milk where ten pence-per-litre (14 cents) of the retail price will go directly to dairy farmers. FFA welcomes this initiative but believes that it is not enough to guarantee British producers sustainable prices. These discussions are still ongoing and till such time, there shall be no protests at Morrisons.

The FFA is of the opinion that protests should continue in the coming days and weeks at places where milk products are still being sold below value (distribution centres, supermarkets). Over the last week, FFA has organised as well a number of "trolley dashes" across Britain in which farmers sweep supermarket shelves clear of milk and donate it to charities.

The protests staged by the British dairy farmers are effective in the media: Last weekend [two heifers were led through the aisles of the Asda store](#), joined by around 70 protesters.

Lithuania

At a meeting in Jonava on August 7, Lithuanian milk producers presented a list of demands to the Lithuanian government (President, Prime Minister, Minister of Agriculture and Members of Parliament). This document calls for quick, sustainable solutions at national and European level to reinstate the balance in the dairy sector. If no measures are taken, Lithuanian farmers have declared nation-wide protests.

[<<< back](#)