

News Details

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12.10.2009

"We need a change of system" - The EMB on the EU Ministers of Agriculture meeting in Vienna

In addition to the extraordinary meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture last Monday, another extraordinary EU Ministers of Agriculture meeting was convened for 12 October owing to the pressure exerted by the European dairy farmers in recent months. The meeting was accompanied by a demonstration by EMB dairy farmers from various European countries outside the building where the ministers were meeting. A large number of demonstrators carried signs saying "Change the System", expressing their demand to the ministers to steer the milk policy towards flexible supply control.

As a result of their meeting, the Ministers of Agriculture agreed among other things to regulation of the milk market after the abolition of the quotas, to an increase in the stockpiling of cheese, to clearer marking for milk produce substitutes and to an extension of the school milk scheme to universities. Financial subsidies for the coming year are to be topped up by 300 million euros in line with proposals.

"A correction of the failed EU milk policy is unavoidable. The EMB has put forward proposals for this. Flexible supply control can make positive use of the market's forces. Subsidies cannot help improve the situation", said EMB President Romuald Schaber. "300 million in subsidies or increasing intervention are no effective solution, given that twenty times that amount has already been wasted." Roberto Cavaliere from the Italian EMB organisation APL added: "The politicians ought not to let too much time pass before they take effective measures. The EMB is ready for talks, to put suitable measures in place in conjunction with the politicians."

This raft of demands submitted to the Swedish presidency of the Council and the European Commission on 19 July was backed by Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain.

Yesterday shows the way for the Ministers of Agriculture's meeting next week in Luxembourg on 19 and 20 October, at which resolutions will be passed. Pascal Massol from the French APLI stresses: "We will be there in Luxemburg and make it clear that the change of system has to take the shape of flexible supply control. There has to be a correction to the EU milk policy to date by 19/20 October at the latest."

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