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Join the Food Revolution Newsletter

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Every month food actors who joined the 'Join the Food Revolution' network share their story, showing the way to take back control over your plate –

WHAT'S ON THE PLATE?

Upcoming Events

GREEN INSIGHT INTO EU FOOD POLICY

End of Milk Quota: Greens support small producers and call for a crisis management scheme

The 31st of March 2015 'celebrated' the end of 31 years of milk quotas. On that day the European Milk Board (EMB) organised a strong symbolic action in front of the European Parliament. European dairy farmers intended to use this action to denounce the fact that there are no sufficient crisis instruments for

the period following the removal of the quota. The follow-up system reveals major shortcomings. In the future, dairy farmers in Europe will have even less market power that would allow them to defend their interests. In order to foresee and to prevent crises the EMB calls for the Implementation of a market responsibility programme. As Greens, we support the EMB in this approach and, showed our support for milk producers at the action on 31 March.

More about our main demands here

Watch videos of our MEPs at the action on 31st March (EN/FR/DE)

More info on the Market Responsibility Programme of the EMB here

TTIP: a major concern for the future of our food and democracy

The highly disputed free trade agreement (TTIP) between the EU and US which is currently under negotiation could have deep impacts on how we produce our food. Though there are few policy areas which have such a direct impact on people and the planet, this was one of the issues that was largely left out of the TTIP-debate. And this is why the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament (EP) organised (together with a broad range of organisations: ARC2020, Compassion in World Farming, Corporate Europe Observatory, Eurocoop, European Coordination Via Campesina, European Milk Board, Friends of the Earth Europe and Slowfood) a big conference and debate "TTIP talks – What's Cooking? – Perspectives on Food and Farming" on 10 December 2014. The Greens/EFA now recently published a report summarising the presentations and discussions of this conference.

This publication coincides with a crucial phase in the Parliament, where several committees recently voted on their assessment of TTIP. These reports were voted on in particular by the European Parliament's Agriculture (AGRI) and Environment (ENVI) Committees. While the Greens welcomed the result of the vote in ENVI, the vote in AGRI revealed the level of difficulty involved in successfully voting through any progressive text or criticism of the deal. Key amendments which we supported included ending the negotiations, rejecting ISDS and taking agricultural products- especially meat - off the table of the negotiations, but these were rejected in the AGRI vote.

These reports will be taken on board by the Trade committee which is in the lead for preparing the Parliament's first ever opinion on TTIP, which will most likely be voted in plenary in May.

Also this week, as we approach the Global Action Day on TTIP, MEPs from different political groups welcomed Sharon Treat, a Health and Environmental lawyer from the US to discuss US legislators' perspectives on the ongoing TTIP negotiations on regulatory cooperation for food policies. Sharon Treat is a lawyer with a degree in public and international policy from Princeton University, working on trade, environment and food policy. She serves on the Maine Citizen Trade Policy Commission. She has been a US state legislator for 22 years, serving in both the Maine House and Senate, where she sponsored trade policy legislation on procurement and also chaired the environment, trade and judiciary committees. She also has worked for the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators (NCEL) on TTIP issues, which has over 1,000 members in US state legislatures who are in both Democratic and Republican parties.

Here is Sharon Treat's main message:

"Once the public and parliamentarians on both sides of the Atlantic understand what's at stake, TTIP's "regulatory cooperation" proposals will become as divisive as ISDS.

Like ISDS, regulatory cooperation undermines democratic institutions and gives foreign investors powerful new tools to challenge and weaken regulations across the board. Unfortunately, some of the worst aspects of the US regulatory system which have delayed and effectively halted necessary food, health and safety regulations are now proposed for TTIP – with trade negotiators on both sides of the Atlantic supporting risky proposals."

Watch More on Sharon Treat's message in our video

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Eating from the Farm - the social, environmental, and economic benefits of local food systems. A report by Friends of the Earth Europe

The globalisation of food production has led to an industrial monopoly within the agricultural sector. A small number of companies now dominate the supply of seeds, agri-chemicals, processing, logistics and even food production. However, communities across Europe are showing that there is another option, and taking back ownership of food production. This line of argument is what Friends of the Earth Europe's latest report aims to demonstrate.

From farmers' markets in Prague to community-supported agriculture systems – where communities come together to collectively buy from and support local farms – in France and Italy, citizens are taking back control of the food system.

The benefits of breaking the supermarket cycle are far-reaching. Reconnecting people with the food they eat and the people that produce it is a powerful way to establish a sense of community and links us to our shared natural world.

In practice, this means going beyond buying 'local' food from big chains which otherwise reinforce our broken, industrialised agricultural system. It means making entire food systems local: working with other citizens and farmers to shorten supply chains for the benefit of local communities and economies.

Transitioning towards agro-ecology: Using the CAP to build new food systems

ARC2020 and Friends of the Earth Europe, in association with IFOAM EU published a new brochure showcasing best practices for food and farming based on agro-ecological methods.

Ten different approaches from all over Europe, give us an overview of production techniques and locally based initiatives aiming to support and revive the rural community and our food system in the long-term.

JOIN THE FOOD REVOLUTION: THE STORY OF THE MONTH

Frank is an active citizen and food innovator. He owns his grocery store where he sells seasonal fruits and vegetables. He also shares tips on natural gardening on his blog for those interested, and organises workshops to teach you how to get green AND organic fingers! Get to know more about Frank and Join the Food Revolution yourself!

WHAT'S ON THE PLATE?

18/04: **TTIP Global Day of Action**

A wide coalition of NGOs and civil rights groups are organising a global day of action against trade and investment treaties. You can register your event or join a local one via the website here

19-23/04: Global Soil Week, Berlin, Germany

20/04: Agri-Fish Council meeting, Brussels, Belgium

21/04: Launch of European Red List on Bees: the status of European bees and their critical role in pollination, Brussels, Belgium

6-8/05: GMO-Free Europe conference, Berlin, Germany

Recommended

Opinion

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Study



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Contact person



Nelly Baltide

Advisor on Development

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