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CAP reform

Outlook not good for CAP reform as MEPs begin debate on key legislative proposals

The European Parliament agriculture committee today concluded its initial debate on 4 key legislative proposals aimed at reforming the EU's Common Agricultural Policy. The Greens believe the CAP needs a radical overhaul to promote sustainable farming and food systems, instead of subsidising intensive industrial agriculture and unsustainable farming practices. However, already weak proposals from the Commission would be further weakened by the draft legislative reports being considered by the agriculture committee. Commenting in the context of the debate, Green agriculture spokesperson and vice-chair of the EP agriculture committee **José Bové** (France) said:

“The legislative reports on CAP reform presented this week would weaken already unambitious proposals from the Commission. If a majority of MEPs endorses this approach, it would render the CAP reform devoid of all meaning and the EP, as a co-legislator on CAP for the first time, would have contributed nothing to addressing some of the key problems which lead to the currently wasteful CAP subsidising intensive agriculture and unsustainable farming practices. The status quo is not a viable option but this reform could fail to effect any real change.

"Worryingly, a scheme proposed by the Commission aimed at supporting small farmers would be made optional for member states under the draft EP report, which scandalously proposes paying off small farmers to leave farming. This would destroy the social fabric of rural communities."

Green agriculture spokesperson **Martin Häusling** (Germany) added:

"The proposals on supply management should go some way towards preventing over-production and reducing price volatility. However, there is a need to go further and explicitly end distorting export subsidies, which result in the dumping of EU farm products onto fragile markets in developing countries.

"Of major concern are the proposals to weaken controls and sanctions on the implementation of EU law. This would risk undermining important EU rules, such as on water quality or pesticides, when instead the EU should be a frontrunner in sustainable agriculture. As a very minimum, the CAP should be sustainable, which means properly enforcing current rules and dispelling the myth that enforcing these rules is a complicated burden on farmers. Sustainable agriculture makes agronomic sense and is in the interests of farmers, as well the environment and the general public, which currently pays a high price for the costs of unsustainable food systems."

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Responsible MEPs



José Bové

Member



Martin Häusling

Member

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