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Commission must do more for small farmers

Common Agricultural Policy

The European Commission has today published a communication on the future of the common agricultural policy (CAP). The Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament is calling for much greater support for small farmers.

Greens/EFA MEP **Molly Scott Cato** comments:

"The business-as-usual approach of the Commission is deeply disappointing. The CAP must not be there simply to subsidise industrial farming and big agribusiness at the taxpayers' expense. We need to see redistribution of EU funds away from mega-farms and wealthy landowners and towards the small and part-time farmers who are at risk of disappearing from Europe's agricultural economy.

"The future of agriculture and farming communities depends upon rural infrastructure investment. Instead, the Commission wants to enable the leakage of public money towards financiers and insurers, which risks leaving the fundamental challenges unsolved. Adapting farming practices is the best way to face climate change and ensure long-term productivity, and the CAP should incentivise and reward farmers making the transition towards sustainable and resilient systems.

"The ultimate measure of the CAP will be if it delivers healthy and sustainable food for people across the EU while ensuring the livelihoods of rural communities. If we are to achieve this, farmers need fair prices and a stronger position in the supply chain. No Member State can hope to meet the social, environmental and economic challenges facing farming alone. The CAP must be genuinely common, not a series of individual national policies. It is disappointing that the Commission is making so little effort to ensure this."

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