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[Press release](#) | 09.11.2022

Ramping up and subsidising production of fertilisers will not solve the crisis

Fertilisers

Today, the Commission published their Communication on Ensuring availability and affordability of fertilisers. The Greens/EFA welcomes the reference in the Communication to promote efficient use and the replacing of synthetic fertilisers. However, the communication falls short on a number of points, and the Greens/EFA group is especially concerned with messages given to Member States to subsidise the fertiliser industry, and indirectly subsidising Russian gas that fuels it. This industry is not only a significant source of global greenhouse gas emissions but is also currently enjoying substantial windfall profits.

Thomas Waitz MEP, Greens/EFA member of the Agriculture and Rural development committee, comments:

“It is high time that the EU places emphasis on providing resources, incentives and advice to farmers to adopt agroecological practices that reduce and eventually eliminate their costly dependence on synthetic fertilisers. The success story of organic farming in many Member States demonstrates that this change is possible. Topsoil formation, crop rotation including nitrogen-fixing legumes, leguminous cover crops, and traditional or green manures are all affordable and accessible alternatives.

“Using synthetic fertilisers comes with a massive cost for the environment, the climate and human health, including a high number of deaths due to air pollution. It is also a very energy intensive sector using Russian gas, and with a huge climate impact. Therefore we absolutely need to radically reduce the use of synthetic fertilisers, in line with the Green Deal and Farm to Fork objective of 20% reduction in fertiliser use.”

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