



**Friends of  
the Earth  
Europe**

## **Common Agricultural Policy fails small farmers and the environment yet again**

**Press release**

**Brussels/Strasbourg, 23 November 2021**

The European Parliament today greenlighted reforms for a new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) [1]. For the European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC) and Friends of the Earth Europe (FOEE) it is a missed opportunity to support a transition towards the more agroecological and sustainable models deeply needed for Europe's food and farming sector. It fails to address the loss of small- and medium-sized farmers, the low prices of their production, low incomes, and the concentration of production.

The majority of MEPs [2] voted in support of the legislative texts on the new policy, agreed in June 2021. For ECVC and FOEE, these texts will not lead to any major improvements to the current harmful system and most of the €400 billion will continue to be spent on agri-industrial business-as-usual farming. Despite the green rhetoric and some measures to improve sustainability, the lack of current market regulation instruments in increasingly globalised food chains will lead to further industrialisation of European agriculture, destroying the most sustainable models. **Andoni García Arriola, Basque Country farmer and a coordination member of the European Coordination Via Campesina** said: *"The reform is a missed opportunity to provide small and medium-scale sustainable producers with the adequate political, economic and social support they need. This implies fair prices, setting a strong capping for direct payments on big beneficiaries and an ambitious redistribution of aid."*

*"Currently, the average income of farmers in Europe is 50% lower than the average income of the population, and less than 2% of CAP beneficiaries receive 30% of the total budget of direct payments [3]. This will not change with the new policy. More money for rural development and a collective approach of projects where peasant agroecology is promoted was unfortunately not put forward."*, **Andoni García Arriola** continued.

**Stanka Becheva, food and farming campaigner at Friends of the Earth Europe** commented: *"This policy will put even more farms out of business and is driving Europe away from its Green Deal objectives. Millions of farms in Europe have already disappeared, and nature – without which food production is not possible – is in grave danger. We've got here because of wrong policies and warped farming subsidies benefiting a few factory farms. Now this failing system looks set to continue, spelling disaster for the environment and small farmers."*

Friends of the Earth Europe and the European Coordination Via Campesina have long since called for a reform supporting a transition addressing the loss of small- and medium-sized sustainable farmers, the low prices of their production and their low incomes, the concentration of production, and generally the need for more farmers in Europe. Those producers are essential to fix the climate crisis and the breakdown of the natural world, and to implement food systems providing healthy, affordable, and local food for consumers, respecting nature and climate, and creating safe and dignified employment. [4]

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## Contacts

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## NOTES

[1] Voting results to appear on European Parliament website:

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/votes.html?tab=votes#banner\\_session\\_live](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/votes.html?tab=votes#banner_session_live)

[2] Voting results for key regulation

Common agricultural policy - support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States and financed by the EAGF and by the EAFRD: 452 in favour, 178 against, 57 abstained

[3] "More on Capping direct payments", 2018: <http://capreform.eu/more-on-capping-direct-payments-2/>

[4] 'More farmers, better food', 2019 <https://www.eurovia.org/more-farmers-better-food-updated-in-f2f-context/>