The consequences of the Ukrainian war for European food sovereignty

In the dramatic context of the situation in Ukraine, the European Union has seen a dangerous narrative emerge that questions the suitability of the Farm to Fork Strategy to ensure food security in Europe. In an analysis by European small-scale farmers ECVC reaffirms its support for the objectives of the F2F and calls for renewed commitment to equip this strategy with public policy instruments and to facilitate the necessary transition towards more resilient agricultural and livestock models that are less dependent on imported inputs, particularly in the context of the Ukraine crisis.

We are living in dramatic times: thousands of people are dying, millions are at risk, and hundreds of thousands are fleeing for refuge as a result of the war in Ukraine triggered by Russia’s invasion. At this stage, Ukrainian farmers will probably not be able to plant this year and we express our support for those affected by the events. The war is causing food and energy problems across Europe. This situation requires extraordinary measures to feed populations, but also a major effort to rebuild Europe’s food sovereignty.

ECVC underlines that it is the ten million European farmers who guarantee food security, food sovereignty and a healthy environment, not industrial agriculture. Behind this geopolitical crisis, there is a climate, biodiversity and land crisis that also threatens the food sovereignty and food security of the European population. These crises cannot simply be cast aside. In light of the war in Ukraine in relation to food security, the problem is not the objectives of the F2F strategy, but the lack of instruments and holistic vision to make the necessary transition and change the paradigm of agriculture and the food supply chain.

Therefore, ECVC insists upon the need to tackle these problems through public policy instruments, market regulation and by moving away from the dogma of free trade that has destroyed our food sovereignty and our environment.

From the point of view of Fergal Anderson, ECVC member and Irish organisation: "We want to clearly underline that abandoning the F2F strategy would not contribute to solving the enormous challenges facing European agriculture. On the contrary, the war in Ukraine shows that our dependence on synthetic fertilisers produced from Russian gas is a major fragility for our food sovereignty. Similarly, livestock farming is massively dependent on imports of cereals and oilseeds.”

“Faced with the fragilities revealed by the current crisis, it is more necessary than ever to support an agricultural model based on the mixed, complementary livestock farming and crop production, which is the only way to guarantee soil fertility in the long term. We advocate public policies and market regulation to support the transition towards more autonomous and resilient agroecological models.”

To better understand the position of ECVC and European farmers on the consequences of the Ukrainian war for European food sovereignty, you can read the whole article here.

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