EU Vision for Agriculture and Food 2025–2029

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European Commission sets out its Vision for Agriculture and Food for 2025–2029

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A Vision for Agriculture and Food – Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations

Update

The European Commission's communication ("the Vision") sets out a roadmap for European Union (EU) activities for the period 2025–2029. It aims to guide and align policy development in strategic issues for agriculture and food.

The Vision sets the following four priority areas for EU interventions:

- Making agri-food an attractive and predictable sector that ensures a fair standard of living and leverages new income opportunities
- Ensuring the competitiveness and resilience of the agri-food sector
- Ensuring the agri-food sector contributes to preserving healthy soils, clean water and air, and protecting and restoring biodiversity
- Valuing food and promoting fair living and working conditions in vibrant rural areas.

The communication focuses primarily on EU farmers, and how to ensure that farmers get sufficient revenue and the right public financial support. But there is also a strong emphasis on the EU food sector's competitiveness versus food imports. The Vision announces further evaluation of whether the EU food sector is disadvantaged by food imports due to more stringent EU rules, in particular relating to pesticides and animal welfare. It also anticipates strengthening controls on imports. The EU will continue to engage in global and bilateral cooperation to work towards global standards.

The document also restates the EU's commitment to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and tackling global challenges. The EU will continue to reinforce partnerships and cooperation with international organisations to develop innovative solutions.

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What is changing?

A Vision for Agriculture and Food outlines responses to the major challenges facing the EU agri-food sectors:

- high reliance on certain agricultural products, e.g. fish, oilseeds, and protein crops
- depopulation of rural areas
- increasing concerns about food security due to the recent pandemic, rising input costs, geopolitical uncertainty, and extreme weather events
- an ageing farming population
- low farming incomes compared to the rest of the economy.

As in the EU's 2020 Farm to Fork Strategy, environmental sustainability is a key objective. This new strategy pays greater attention to the well-being and fair treatment of EU farmers and supporting agricultural innovation.

Particularly relevant to AGRINFO partners is the communication's framing of the relationship between food produced in Europe and food imports. The EU aims for "fairer global competition", which will require the following.

- Global consensus on farming and food standards while recognising the complexities, the EU aims to work globally to raise global standards, in particular relating to pesticides and animal welfare, and to encourage a common understanding of on-farm sustainable food production.
- Bilateral dialogue: the EU will use trade negotiations and policy dialogues to reinforce agreements on sustainability and sustainable development. Dialogues will be established with key bilateral, regional, and continental partners, with specific attention to the impacts of EU regulations on local agri-food systems.
- Aligning food imports with EU rules: to respond to concerns that the EU food sector is at a disadvantage compared to food imports due to more stringent EU rules, the Commission will aim to ensure that imported food is aligned to EU production standards, in particular in relation to pesticides and animal welfare. This will include an evaluation of a new policy whereby import tolerance maximum residue levels (MRLs) would not be approved for pesticides that are banned in Europe for either health or environmental reasons, and preventing the export of pesticides banned in the EU (see Pesticide residue import tolerance MRLs explained). The Commission will also propose rules that set the same animal welfare and livestock production standards for imported and EU products.
- Strengthening import controls: a new task force will be established to oversee more stringent enforcement.

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- New initiatives: non-EU countries will also need to apply new initiatives including: extension of country of origin labelling in the livestock and meat sector; targeted labelling relating to animal welfare; revision of animal welfare legislation, including to phase out cages; and innovations including new genomic techniques.

Why?

The Vision aims to make the agri-food sector attractive, competitive, and resilient as a key part of the EU's economy. It is intended to make EU agri-food policies and initiatives more predictable and transparent, while pursuing dialogue with stakeholders from the EU agri-food value chain.

Timeline

The Vision provides a roadmap for EU activities during the period 2025–2029 and beyond.

What are the major implications for exporting countries?

The EU aims to boost its competitiveness, including through a more level playing field for EU farmers, in relation to the rest of the world.

The EU aims to ensure that European farmers are not penalised through stricter rules than those affecting imported products. This may lead to stricter rules particularly in the areas of import tolerance MRLs and animal welfare and livestock production standards.

Recommended Actions

Non-EU agri-food operators producing products for export to the EU should monitor upcoming EU consultations and legislation, especially regarding pesticide MRLs, animal welfare, and livestock production standards.

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Background

In 2024, in response to widespread protests by EU farmers, the European Union launched a process to support EU farmers and strengthen their position within the value chain, in the context of geopolitical instability and climate change. The European Commission launched a Strategic Dialogue on the future of EU agriculture, which led to a final report presenting a common understanding and vision for the future of EU's farming and food systems. An expert group, the European Board on Agriculture and Food, was established in January 2025 to continue the multi-stakeholder dialogue and to work with the European Commission by providing strategic advice to create inclusive agri-food policies.

Several recent reports (Draghi 2024; Letta 2024; Niinistö 2024) highlight farmers' key role in ensuring food security, contributing to the EU's competitiveness and driving innovations.

Ursula von der Leyen, re-appointed President of the European Commission for a second mandate (2024-2029), has set new priorities and aligned strategies, including A Competitiveness Compass for the EU listing priority actions to boost EU competitiveness.

In this context of setting new priorities, the *Vision for Agriculture and Food* builds on political discussions, reports, and stakeholder feedback.

Two proposals on EU Farm policy – Strengthening farmers' position in the food supply chain and Strengthening cooperation to enforce rules on unfair trading practices in the agri-food supply chain – have been gathering feedback from EU stakeholders.

Resources

Online resources from the European Commission:

- A Competitiveness Compass for the EU
- European Board on Agriculture and Food
- Questions and answers on the Vision for Agriculture and Food
- Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture
- Strategic Dialogue report
- Vision for Agriculture and Food

Draghi, M. (2024) The future of European competitiveness.

Letta, E. (2024) Much more than a market: Speed, security, solidarity.

Niinistö, S. (2024) Safer together: Strengthening Europe's civilian and military preparedness and readiness.

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Sources

Communication: A Vision for Agriculture and Food – Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations

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