Overview: EU Farm to Fork and Green Deal Initiatives

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EU Green Deal and Farm to Fork Strategy (2020–2024): status of proposed initiatives

European Green Deal

Farm to Fork Strategy

Vision for Agriculture and Food

Update

Under its European Green Deal (2019) and Farm to Fork Strategy (2020), the European Union (EU) proposed a large number of initiatives that were expected to have a significant impact on agri-food exports to the EU. In 2025, this strategy was updated with the new EU Vision for Agriculture and Food.

This report summarises the status (as of July 2026) of the initiatives announced under the Green Deal and Farm to Fork Strategy.

Overview

The European Green Deal, adopted at the end of 2019, set out policy initiatives that aimed to put the EU on the path to a green transition, and to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. It included actions to boost the efficient use of resources, move to a clean circular economy, restore biodiversity, and cut pollution.

The Farm to Fork Strategy complemented the European Green Deal, focusing on making food systems fair, healthy, and environmentally friendly. Adopted in May 2020, the strategy was intended to guide EU actions in this field for the 2020–2024 period. It set out both regulatory and non-regulatory initiatives.

Pursuing its efforts towards sustainable transition, in February 2025 the European Commission published the Vision for Agriculture and Food, which includes the need for simplification of certain EU requirements to enhance the competitiveness of the EU agri-food sector. This new roadmap will guide EU activities and align policy development in strategic issues for agriculture and food, taking over from the Farm to Fork Strategy.

See EU Vision for Agriculture and Food and Simplification of EU food and feed safety rules.

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Sustainability

Sustainable food systems framework legislation

The proposal for a legislative framework for sustainable food systems was one of the flagship initiatives of the Farm to Fork Strategy. As well as pursuing specific sustainability-related goals, this law was intended to mainstream sustainability in all the EU's policies, and to establish a new legal framework for all future food policy and legislation. The framework was expected to contain definitions of sustainability, principles on labelling requirements for food products, and minimum criteria for sustainable public procurement of food. However, work on this initiative did not progress as originally planned.

Timeline: The initiative was officially abandoned in March 2026 (European Parliament 2026).

Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)

Directive 2022/2464 (CSRD) outlines the information that companies have to report regarding the risks and opportunities arising from social and environmental issues, and on the impacts of their activities on people and the environment. This helps investors, civil society organisations, consumers, and other stakeholders to evaluate a company's sustainability performance.

In 2026, changes were introduced to the CSRD limiting the obligations to report to only the largest companies, and restricting the information that reporting companies may request from smaller suppliers (below 1,000 employees).

Timeline: Most EU-based companies that are required to report on corporate sustainability must do so from **2028** (reporting on the 2027 financial year). For non-EU companies that are required to report on corporate sustainability, this obligation applies from **2029** (reporting on the 2028 financial year).

See Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD).

Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CS3D)

Directive 2024/1760 (CS3D) aims to foster sustainable and responsible corporate behaviour throughout global value chains. Large companies operating in the EU are required to identify and, where necessary, to prevent, end, or mitigate adverse impacts of their activities on human rights (such as child labour and exploitation of workers) and on the environment (such as pollution and biodiversity loss).

In February 2026, changes were introduced to the CS3D. Fewer companies must now comply with these rules. Only the following remain in the scope of this Directive:

- EU companies with more than 5,000 employees and a net worldwide turnover above €1.5 billion
- non-EU companies with a net turnover above €1.5 billion within the EU.

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These obligations intensify scrutiny of environmental and human rights impacts along value chains supplying the EU market. While most non-EU operators are not directly addressed by these obligations, they may have to provide a greater quantity and range of information on their operations to their EU buyers, to help them demonstrate that sufficient attention ("due diligence") is being paid to these possible adverse impacts. Some restrictions have been introduced in terms of the information that companies can demand from suppliers.

Timeline: Directive 2024/1760 applies from **26 July 2029**.

See Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive.

Revision of EU marketing standards on fruit and vegetables, honey/fruit juices and jams, olive oil, the hop sector, eggs, and poultrymeat

EU marketing standards help to improve the quality of products, provide consumers with adequate and transparent information, and improve financial returns to growers by reducing false claims and unfair competition. Some current standards are now becoming outdated and may hinder efforts to make food systems more efficient and sustainable. The revisions aim to encourage the supply of more sustainable products, address the issue of food waste, and simplify current legislation.

Timeline: Revised standards have been published as follows:

- olive oil, November 2022 (Regulations 2022/2104 and 2022/2105 – see Olive oil marketing standards – 2024 revision)
- the fruit and vegetables sector, November 2023 (Regulation 2023/2430 – see Revised fruit and vegetable marketing standards)
- eggs, November 2023 (Regulations 2023/2464, 2023/2465, 2023/2466 – see Revised egg marketing standards)
- the hop sector, December 2023 (Regulations 2024/601, 2024/602 – see Marketing standards in the hop sector)
- honey, fruit juices, and jams, June 2024 (Directive 2024/1438 – see Revised marketing standards for honey, fruit juices, fruit jams, and preserved milk)
- poultrymeat, February 2026 (Regulations 2026/343, 2026/344 - see Revised marketing standards for poultry meat).

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EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)

Deforestation and forest degradation are occurring at an alarming rate, aggravating climate change and biodiversity loss. The main driver is the expansion of agricultural land to produce commodities such as cattle, wood, rubber, palm oil, soy, cocoa, and coffee. The objective of the EU Deforestation Regulation 2023/1115 (EUDR) is to curb deforestation and forest degradation resulting from EU consumption and production. It aims to minimise consumption of products coming from supply chains associated with deforestation or forest degradation, and to increase EU demand for, and trade in, legal and "deforestation free" commodities and products. This will provide opportunities to enhance trade from non-EU countries in deforestation free products, as well as boosting opportunities, and creating a fairer and more transparent market for suppliers that invest in sustainable, forest-friendly strategies.

Companies supplying the EU market with cattle, wood, rubber, palm oil, soy, cocoa, and coffee will have to demonstrate that all products were produced on land where there has been no deforestation after 31 December 2020, and in accordance with legislation in the country of origin. To support this due diligence process, producers and exporters will have to provide specific geolocation information linked to individual production plots of land, and demonstrate the right to use that land. The requirements and timescale may be challenging for some small-scale producers, for businesses sourcing from complex value chains with large numbers of smallholders, and for smallholders/ indigenous communities in countries where enforcement of land rights is weak.

Application of the EUDR was postponed to December 2026 and certain obligations have been simplified. For more information, see Review of EU Deforestation Regulation: simplification.

In May 2026, the European Commission published a proposal to clarify which products must meet EUDR requirements (see EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR): Clarifications May 2026).

Timeline: Regulation 2023/1115 was published in June 2023. The EUDR now applies from **30 December 2026** for large EU companies, and from **30 June 2027** for micro- and small EU companies.

See EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).

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Labelling

Proposal for a Green Claims Directive

Today it is difficult for consumers, companies, and other market actors to make sense of the many labels and initiatives on the environmental performance of products and companies. There are more than 200 environmental labels active in the EU, and more than 450 worldwide. Some of these are reliable, but some are not, and they cover a diverse range of issues. Greenwashing is also a problem, where companies give a false impression of their environmental impact or benefits. This misleads consumers and does not give fair advantage to companies that are making the effort to genuinely make their products and activities greener. This initiative aimed to establish common methods and enforcement mechanisms to verify the accuracy of environmental claims for all products (including agri-food products) before they are put on the EU market.

This proposal is currently on hold (see Timeline). However, a general prohibition of unsubstantiated or misleading environmental and social claims on products applies from **27 September 2026**: Directive 2024/825 bans vague environmental claims (for example “green” or “environmentally friendly”) that cannot be demonstrated.

Timeline: The proposed Green Claims Directive was under discussion in the European Parliament and the Council of the EU, but the proposal is “pending” (European Commission 2025a) and there is no indication that negotiations, halted in June 2025, will start again.

See Proposal for a Green Claims Directive.

Sustainability labelling framework

Under the Farm to Fork Strategy, the European Commission announced a proposal for a sustainability labelling framework with the aim of empowering consumers to make informed and sustainable food choices. The proposal would govern the information given to consumers relating to the sustainability of food products, including nutritional, climate, environmental, and social aspects. For companies supplying the EU market, this would help sustainable suppliers to differentiate their products, mitigating potential effects of greenwashing.

Timeline: The EU sustainable food system framework, which was intended to include labelling provisions, was abandoned in March 2026 (European Parliament 2026).

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Origin indication labelling

Indicating the country of origin is currently obligatory for certain foodstuffs, including beef and beef products, unprocessed meat of pigs, sheep, goats, and poultry, fresh fruit and vegetables, fishery products, honey, olive oil, and eggs. Under the Farm to Fork Strategy, a proposal is under development to revise the EU rules on information provided to consumers. This includes extending the mandatory origin labelling to other products such as milk, meat used as an ingredient, rabbit and game meat, rice, durum wheat used in pasta, potatoes, and tomato products. For non-EU suppliers, origin labelling can enhance the value of products with a strong geographical link in relation to their competitors. However, increasing the amount of origin information enables buyers/ customers/ retailers to become more demanding about specific origin, and could potentially limit opportunities to enter markets. The focus on origin, and preference for local sourcing within the EU, could also reduce demand for imported produce.

Timeline: Initially scheduled for the end of 2023, this proposal has been postponed but is still ongoing. The European Commission has announced the "extension of the country of origin labelling in line with sectoral specificities" (European Commission: A Vision for Agriculture and Food).

Nutrient profiles and front-of-pack nutrition labelling

The Farm to Fork Strategy targeted the entire food chain, and highlighted the need to empower consumers through labelling information. It announced a proposal for EU harmonised and mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling, and for setting nutrient profiling criteria (thresholds of nutrients above or below which nutrition and health claims on foods are restricted).

Timeline: Initially scheduled for the end of 2023, this proposal has not advanced.

Livestock

Revision of existing animal welfare legislation

The Farm to Fork Strategy foresaw revision of the following legislation: a Directive on the protection of animals kept for farming purposes; four Directives laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens, broilers, pigs, and calves; and Regulations on the protection of animals during transport and at the time of killing. A proposal on animal welfare labelling is also foreseen.

For non-EU countries supplying the EU market, changes to animal welfare rules may increase demands for monitoring/ certification, and potentially increase costs to meet more stringent animal welfare requirements.

Timeline: A proposal on the protection of animals during transport was published in December 2023 and is being reviewed by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU (see Animal welfare during transport). The European Commission will continue preparatory work on other animal welfare proposals.

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See Revision of animal welfare rules.

Revision of Feed Additives Regulation

The current Feed Additives Regulation 1831/2003 sets out rules for authorising feed additives and placing them on the market.The Farm to Fork Strategy announced a revision of these rules, establishing new criteria to promote the authorisation of feed additives, with positive effects on animal welfare and on the environment. It envisaged support mechanisms to promote innovation in feed additives, particularly those contributing to reducing the use of antibiotics and mitigating climate change. Further aims included streamlining the risk assessment processes, and reducing the administrative burden for authorisation holder applications, to bring innovative feed additives to the market earlier.

Timeline: This proposal is at least partly tackled through the initiative on Simplification of rules on feed additive authorisations.

See also Evaluation of Feed Additives Regulation and launch of online EU Register of Feed Additives.

Plant health/pesticides

Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation

The European Commission's original (2022) proposal on the sustainable use of plant protection products was rejected by the European Parliament. In February 2024, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced that this proposal has been withdrawn. The Commission will now focus on improving implementation of Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides (European Commission 2024).

See Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation proposal.

Pesticides containing biological active substances

The European Commission has adopted new rules to facilitate the approval of microorganisms for use as active substances in plant protection products. The aim is to simplify the risk assessment of microorganisms and bring them to the EU market more quickly. This will increase access to biological plant protection products, in line with the Farm to Fork Strategy objective of reducing dependency on chemical pesticides. The more rapid development of this technology in Europe could accelerate the availability of non-chemical options in non-EU countries.

Timeline: Four Regulations (2022/1438, 2022/1439, 2022/1440, 2022/1441) were published in 2022.

See Approval of biopesticides and Simplification of rules on pesticide MRLs and approvals.

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Food safety

Proposal on new genomic techniques

In 2001 the EU established rules for genetically modified organisms (GMOs) (Directive 2001/18/EC). Since then, new genomic techniques (NGTs) have been developed, which the European Commission believes can benefit farmers, consumers, and the environment. However, the current rules make it challenging for products from these NGTs to enter the EU market. So the Commission has proposed new rules with two different categories of NGT plants/ products, as follows.

- Plants/ products considered equivalent to those produced through regular breeding will not have to follow current EU GMO rules (Directive 2001/18/EC and Regulation 1830/2003) – they only need to be notified/ verified by the EU (but not risk assessed) before being introduced to the market.
- Plants/ products considered not to be equivalent to those produced by conventional breeding must undergo risk assessment and authorisation under the existing GMO rules.

Timeline: The new rules regarding NGT plants (Regulation 2026/1388) were adopted in June 2026.

See Proposal on new genomic techniques.

Regulation on plastic materials/articles that come into contact with foods

Regulation 2025/351 sets new rules for plastic food contact materials (FCM) to improve quality control. In particular, it aligns existing rules on plastic FCM (Regulation 10/2011) with legislation on recycled plastic FCM (Regulation 2022/1616).

Regulation 2025/351 introduces purity requirements for substances obtained from waste and natural materials, and adds quality control rules on good manufacturing practice. These rules form part of the measures being brought forward under the EU Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP). The changes are designed to reduce dependency on raw materials, boost the market for recycled plastics, and ensure that recycled plastics are safe when used in contact with food. Components of FCM can transfer from packaging materials into food, affecting not only the safety of the food but also the quality, taste, smell, and appearance. The rules ensure the safety of these materials, including the decontamination of plastic during recycling, and regulation of all recycling processes. Recycling installations located outside the European Union must be on the EU register, and must fully comply with the new Regulation, if their recycled plastic is to be used on food products placed on the EU market.

Timeline: Regulation 2022/1616 on recycled plastic FCM entered into force in 2022; Regulation 2025/351 on (recycled) plastic materials and articles intended to come into contact with foods applies from **16 March 2025**.

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See Plastic food contact materials: good manufacturing practice .

Packaging

Packaging and packaging waste

The Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) 2025/40 sets new rules with stricter sustainability requirements for all food packaging, which will also apply to non-EU suppliers of packaged food to the EU market.

- All packaging must be recyclable. Plastic packaging must contain minimum amounts of recycled plastic, packaging must be minimised, and contaminants must be reduced. Producers of recycled plastic in non-EU countries must produce it in a way that is equivalent to EU standards on collection of plastic and environmental emissions.
- There will be new limits on concentrations of substances of concern, including polyfluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS) in packaging.
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with new sustainability requirements must be passed along the supply chain.
- Certain packaging materials will be banned, including single use plastic packaging for quantities of fresh fruit and vegetables <1.5 kg. All sticky labels attached to fruit and vegetables will have to be compostable.

Timeline: Regulation 2025/40 apply from **12 August 2026**; some new rules apply from earlier in 2026, and recyclability and recycled plastic targets will apply from 2030.

See New EU packaging rules explained.

Policy framework for biobased plastics and biodegradable or combustible plastics

The transition to a circular, resource-efficient, climate-neutral economy, together with the ambition to reach zero pollution and the need to protect and enhance biodiversity, have triggered a rethink about how plastics are produced, used, and disposed of in the EU. The European Commission's Bioeconomy Strategy aims to tackle plastic pollution through the development of alternative plastics (e.g. biobased, biodegradable, and compostable) rather than fossil-based plastics (European Commission 2025b). To attain this objective, EU Regulations set specific requirements, such as the obligation set by the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (2025/40) for some types of packaging to be compostable.

Timeline: A Strategic Framework for a Competitive and Sustainable EU Bioeconomy was adopted in 2025.

See Biobased plastics: EU strategy.

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Resources

European Commission (2024) Plenary Meeting of the Advisory Group on Sustainability of Food Systems, 5 December 2024: Summary Record. Health and Food Safety Directorate-General.

European Commission (2025a) Commission work programme 2026 – Europe's Independence Moment.

European Commission (2025b) Commission presents new Bioeconomy Strategy to drive green growth, competitiveness and resilience across Europe. Press release, 27 November.

European Parliament (2026) Legislative Train Schedule: Legislative framework for sustainable food systems.

Sources

European Green Deal

Farm to Fork Strategy

Vision for Agriculture and Food

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