



The President

Mr António COSTA
President of the European Council

17th of March 2025

Dear President António Costa,

In the coming weeks and months, the EU will be confronted with one of the most complex discussions in recent decades: the future budget of the European Union. This will include consideration of European defence, global positioning of the EU, national constraints, inflation, the need to address COVID-related debts, as well as enlargement talks with Ukraine.

Ahead of the European Council meeting next week, where important topics will include the future of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2028-2034, we, as Farm Europe¹, wish to draw your attention on some critical data and figures that underscore the urgent need for the EU to continue strongly supporting the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The potential of agricultural in food production, bioeconomy, and energy is becoming increasingly relevant in EU efforts to strengthen internal strategic autonomy, enhance global food security, and decarbonize Europe.

If we do not adjust the value of the CAP to account for inflation by 2034, we risk losing 54% of its value (equivalent to 250 billion EUR) over a mere 14 years (from 2020 to 2034). This situation is compounded by a steady decline in farmers' income, which has dropped by 12% per hectare over the last two decades. Additionally, the EU has lost 37% of its farmers, and farmers' debt has risen by 30%.

Even more, the EU has lost 11 million hectares of agricultural land, while its agricultural footprint globally has grown by 10 million "imported" hectares.

We consider that this “disinvestment chock” organised over the last decade is currently putting at risk EU strategic autonomy when it comes to agriculture.

The debate will not only concern the budget in term of quantity, but also in terms of quality of the structure of the Multiannual Financial Framework. Its structure will directly influence the sector's future performance and the EU ability to meet agricultural demands without relying on imports to fill the gaps.

¹ *Representing 37 members across 15 EU countries FARM EUROPE is a leading European multistakeholder organization committed to driving the transformation of Europe's agriculture into more economically and environmentally performant systems. As a pan-European organization, FARM EUROPE is committed to promote EU general interest and values, striving to develop policy paths that make the diversity of EU agriculture stronger and more resilient.*

In this respect, proposals to introduce a single fund or a single plan undermines the Rural Development Pillar. This risks renationalizing EU policies, weakening the common approach and the internal market. This approach, which threatens the core principles of the CAP and the funding allocated to it, must be firmly rejected.

Therefore, we urgently call for a dedicated and adequate EU budget for a genuinely common CAP, adjusted for inflation (in constant EUR), with strong leverage to promote investments, territorial balance, and effective risk and crisis management. We underline the fundamental links and coherence needed between the two pillars of the CAP to avoid complexity and fragmentation of this policy, which would ultimately lead to further administrative burdens and lack of consistency.

We stress the need for appropriate means and tools to establish a new direction for EU policy — one that focuses on rebuilding the economic attractiveness of the sector, ensuring agricultural production across Europe (not only in the most productive areas), and fostering genuine agricultural sovereignty. This will enable the EU to meet both its food and non-food demands, contributing to the global growth in demand and enhancing our resilience in an increasingly uncertain world.

We count on your leadership and commitment to securing a future for European agriculture that is strong, sustainable, and capable of meeting the challenges ahead.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of connected, somewhat jagged lines that form a stylized representation of the name 'Yves Madre'. The signature is written above a solid horizontal line.

Yves Madre
President of Farm Europe