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PLAN FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

A plan for resilience, strategic autonomy and sustainability of the EU protein system

EN

Europe is at a crossroads. In a fast-changing world and growing uncertainty, bold action is needed to boost our economic competitiveness while, at the same time, strengthen our strategic autonomy. With security and resilience at the centre of the political agenda and growing pressure on the Europe's growth model, key economic dependencies are turning into geopolitical vulnerabilities.

In that context, the existing dependencies on imported inputs, such as fertilisers, feed and energy are **not only threats for our food security, but central vulnerabilities with an impact on our security**. Reducing these strategic dependencies is therefore crucial for the EU's preparedness and security agenda. Collective action is needed by all actors to guarantee that the EU can amplify both its internal and external security ([1]).

The Union's high dependence of the protein supply from a limited number of origins, not only makes our agri-food system vulnerable to global market fluctuations, it also affects the capacity to derisk the supply chains and limits progress on the sustainability transition.

As announced in the Vision for Agriculture and Food ([2]), the Commission has **developed this comprehensive plan** to address these challenges, integrating policy, research and on the ground efforts to create a more autonomous and sustainable EU protein system, while at the same time diversifying the sources of imports. This responds to the political call by the Leaders enshrined in the **Versailles Declaration** ([3]) of 2022, to increase the EU production of plant-based proteins.

Scaling up sustainable plant-based protein production in the EU requires finding the right incentives for the development of both the supply and the demand as a key step for the EU to advance on the **transformative resilience** needed on the continent. A resilient and sustainable protein system will not only contribute to the EU objectives of food security and energy, but will also create new opportunities in rural areas, contribute to the climate neutrality goal by 2050 and will accelerate the implementation of the objectives established in the recent EU Bioeconomy Strategy ([4]) and the Fertiliser Action Plan ([5]).

The transition towards a **resilient and sustainable protein system** requires **enhanced policy coordination** aiming at:

- Increasing open **strategic autonomy** by expanding **sustainable EU protein supply** through incentivises for **farmers** to adopt diversified production systems with reduced fertiliser needs, enabling farmers to cultivate healthy and resilient protein crops;
- improving the **resilience, competitiveness and preparedness** of the wider EU protein system, including feed industry, by advancing **research and innovation and scaling up investments**;
- strengthening the EU protein value chains by improving **market attractiveness** and **incentivising demand** and promoting local solutions.

These actions will deliver on the EU's **circularity, climate and energy objectives** which create additional stimulus and business cases for the farmers to engage in protein diversification.

([1]) European Commission, *Strategic Foresight Report Resilience 2.0: Empowering the EU to thrive amid turbulence and uncertainty*, COM(2025)484 final.

([2]) European Commission, *A Vision for Agriculture and Food Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations*, COM(2025) 75 final.

([3]) Council of the European Union, *Agriculture and Fisheries Council on Proteins: supply, production and sustainability*, 14 July 2025; European Council, *The Versailles declaration, 10 and 11 March 2022*.

([4]) European Commission, *A Strategic Framework for a Competitive and Sustainable EU Bioeconomy*, COM(2025) 960 final.

([5]) European Commission, *Fertiliser Action Plan: Partnership for ensuring the availability, affordability and strategic autonomy in home-grown EU fertilisers*, COM(2026) 310 final.

This Plan sets out the key facts, identifies leverage points and suggests actions across the supply chain to achieve this aim. It complements the **Livestock Strategy** adopted on XXX.

1. Plant protein supply in the EU

The EU is home to one of the most competitive and sustainable agricultural production systems in the world. However, this strength is constrained by dependencies on imports of feed with high protein content. Support under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has increased domestic supply of plant protein but the potential to further strengthen is there, albeit with some natural and structural limitations.

An EU production largely based on roughage and cereals with a limited share of protein crops

The EU produces a significant amount of plant protein, but mainly in the form of roughage and cereals, i.e. in the form of **low to medium protein content products**. In the 2025/26 marketing year, the EU produced about **67 million tonnes of plant protein** ([6]), with **roughage** at around 31 million tonnes of protein and **cereals** at around 29 million tonnes ([7]) (figure 1)([8]). Grasslands account for more than half of roughage. The EU's production of **protein-rich plants** ([9]) stood at 7.2 million tonnes of protein in 2025/26, having grown significantly over the previous two decades. The production of protein from **dry pulses** reached 1.3 million tonnes in 2025/26 ([10])**.** Although this is a small share of the total, their production increased by 53% for the period 2021-2026 compared to the period 2011-2016.

		Plant protein (million tonnes)		*Share*	
Roughage		30.6		45.5%	
Cereals		29.4		43.7%	
Oilseeds (excluding soya bean)		5.0		7.5%	
Protein crops	Dry pulses	2.2	1.3	3.3%	1.9%
	Soya bean		0.9		1.4%
Total		67.2		100%	

Figure 1: EU plant-protein production in marketing year 2025/26
Source: DG AGRI – Balance Sheets

To note, a shift towards more protein crops with higher protein content than other arable crops would have only a limited impact on the overall crude plant protein balance, due to their comparatively lower yields. However, increasing the share of protein crops in rotation could reduce greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions by reducing the need for fertilisers, whose production and use emit GHG.

([6]) Commission estimates based on the EU cereals and oilseeds balance sheets and EU feed balance sheet.
([7]) Roughage is grass, silage maize, fodder legumes, and dried fodder.
([8]) Statistics in this document are further detailed in factsheets available here: *Reducing the plan protein deficit of the EU - Agriculture and rural development*.
([9]) Protein-rich plants are defined as arable crops with a protein content of more than 15%, i.e., oilseeds and protein crops.
([10]) Dry pulses are field peas, broad beans, lupins and other protein crops.

The increase in EU production of protein-rich plants is mainly attributed to support offered through the CAP and to the EU's agricultural **research and innovation** programmes as guided by the Commission's 2018 report ([11]). As highlighted in the Fertiliser Action Plan, the **nitrogen-fixing property** of protein crops ([12]) helps reduce the need for fertilisers which is a key factor supporting increased production, particularly in a context of escalating costs and tensions on fertiliser supply chains.

EU imports led by soya from the Americas with a potential for soya from Ukraine

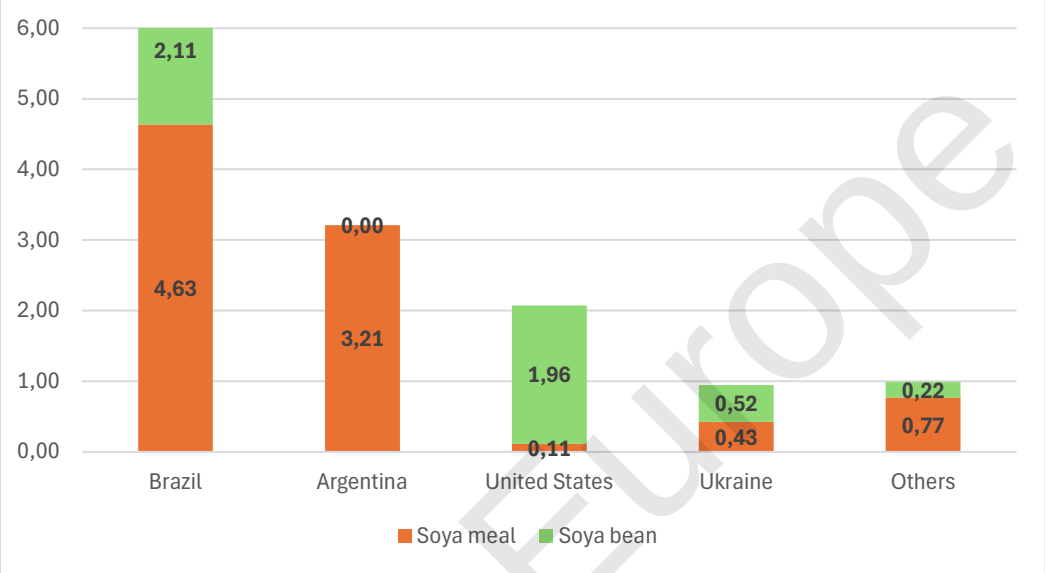

Figure 2: Origin of imported soya protein for marketing year 2024/25 (in million tonnes of crude protein)
Source: DG AGRI –2024/25

The EU imports mainly protein-rich plants in the form of soya bean and meals. They represent about around 13.9 **million tonnes** of total protein imports in 2024/25, which are produced approximately on **13 million hectares in third countries,** primarily in the US and Brazil, as well as in Argentina for soya meal.

The EU neighbourhood offers concrete opportunities to diversify the EU's traditional reliance on major soya bean exporters. With a production of 13.5 million tonnes of plant-based protein and exports accounting for 60% of this production, Ukraine could take a larger role in the EU plant-based protein imports, and in a perspective accession this could reduce the EU trade deficit from 13.9 million tonnes to 4.7 million tonnes and increase the EU's autonomy on plant-based protein from 76% to 86%. Moreover, by doubling, in 2024/25, its soya bean production capacity compared to 2021/22, despite disruptions caused by war, Ukraine has strengthened its role as a strategic partner of the EU. The potential from imports from the Western Balkans is smaller given that some traditional producers in those countries have moved from soybeans exporter to import dependency, driven by increased domestic consumption and lower yields.

([11]) EUR-Lex - 52018DC0757 - EN - EUR-Lex
([12]) In this report, protein crops refer to legumes (including soya). Note that soya is sometimes considered as an oilseed but not in this report.

2. Protein demand in the EU

The demand for proteins in Europe is driven by the needs of the livestock sector for feed, consumer preferences for food and emerging needs as regards circularity and bioenergy.

Animal feed

The EU is a livestock powerhouse: livestock represents, together with arable crops production used as feed, more than half of the total agricultural output (59% in 2024 ([13])). In 2025, the value of exports reached EUR 55 billion, creating a EUR 39 billion trade surplus. The livestock sector is also the **EU's largest user of plant protein**.

The EU livestock sector uses **74 million tonnes** of protein as feed annually ([14]). About 26% is imported but given that the EU also exports the equivalent of 9% of protein in arable crops products or co-products, the **net reliance on protein imports** is 15% of its total feed use (or about 13 million tonnes of protein).

This aggregate figure masks differences by type of feed (Figure 33). Indeed, the EU is largely self-sufficient in low-protein content feed but largely dependent on imports for **high-protein feed (oilseeds and protein crops)**: **74%** of those used in the EU are imported. This is mainly driven by the soya protein, of which 94% is imported.

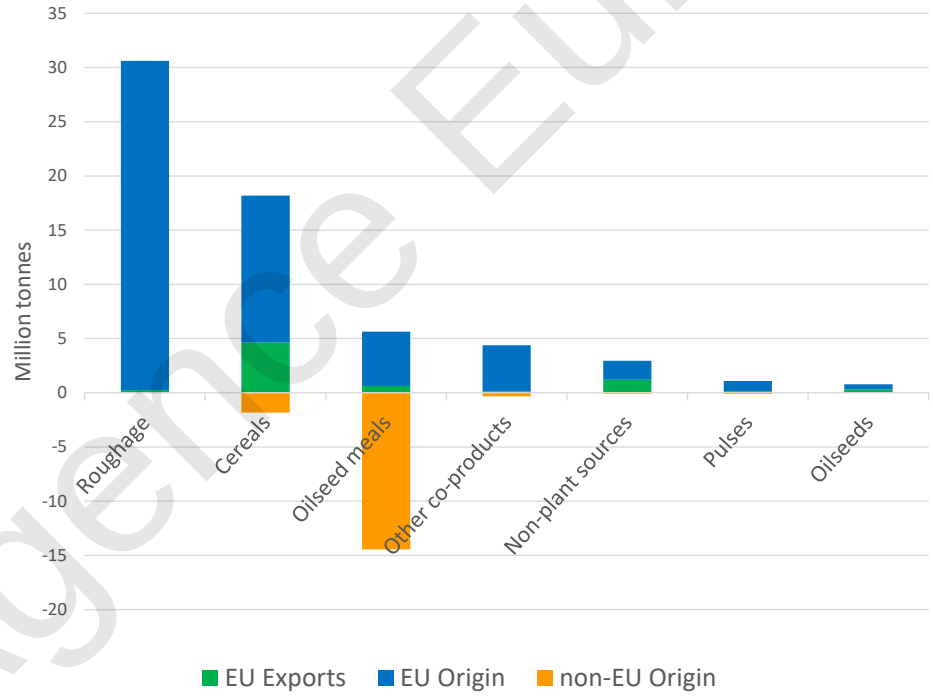

Figure 3: Origin of protein used for feeding EU livestock and exports of those products (in million tonnes of crude protein)
Source: DG AGRI - EU Feed Protein Balance Sheet –2024/25

([13]) This corresponds to primary income generated by both output coming from animal production (45%) and from arable crop production used as feed (14%).
([14]) The main sources of feed protein are roughage (41%), cereals (21%), soya bean meal (19%), and other oilseed meals (9%), and the remaining 10% being various other sources.

The **high-protein plant-based feeds** ([15]) represent a significant share of the total feed use, they account for 31% of the total EU feed use of protein (or 23.0 million tonnes of protein) ([16]). They play a crucial role in several livestock systems, optimising livestock productivity. Replacing them by lower-protein alternatives that are more readily available in the EU is challenging. It requires a careful nutritional assessment and depends on the type of livestock (Figure 4). The **pig and poultry** sectors are the main users of high-protein meals (66% of the use of compound feed ([17]) in the EU), **dairy and beef** sectors account for a lower share (28%).

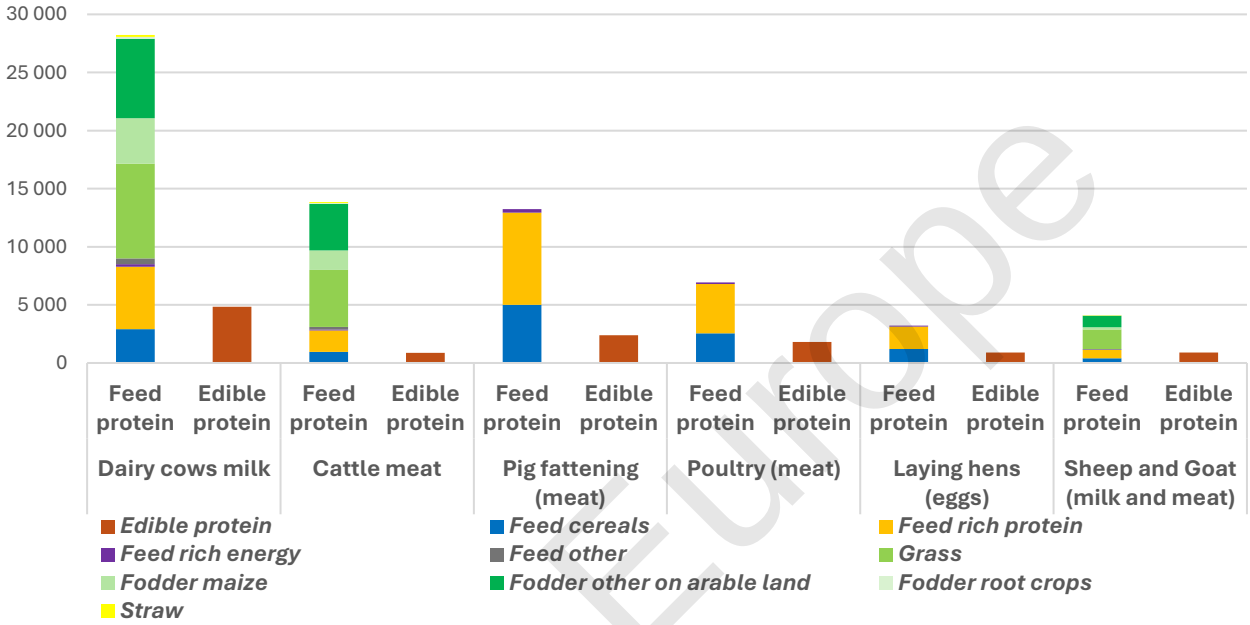

Figure 4: Feed protein use by EU livestock and resulting edible protein production by EU livestock in 2022 (thousand tonnes of crude protein)
Source: CAPRI model database

Dependency on imported protein feed depends very much on the **type and production system of livestock**. More intensive systems rely on compound feed for a large part of their protein, accounting for 25.8 million tonnes of feed protein annually. Its products represent 35% of total protein use by EU livestock.. More extensive ruminant systems, relying on grasslands and locally produced feed and forage, are less import-dependent than intensive systems. Certain production systems, such as agroecological, organic, grass-fed, mixed crop-livestock as well as geographical indications, or under private standards, may lead to an increased use of local feed or impose requirements that limit the volume of imported feed and anchor the production to the territory.

At EU level, the share of **on-farm produced feed is on average limited**: about 21% of total feed in 2023. It is highest in ruminant livestock farms that also cultivate crops (42% in 2023) and lowest in specialised poultry or pig farms (7%).

Different feeding systems with various degree of dependency

The EU livestock sector is characterised by a **variety of feeding strategies**. Intensive livestock production enables optimisation of feeding through precision feeding, addition of synthetic amino acids to complement low protein feed, enzymes, or feed additives, decreasing methane emissions. However,

([15]) High-protein feed has a protein content above 30%, such as most types of oilseed meals.
([16]) In contrast, 94% of low- and medium-protein content feed used in the EU is of EU origin, and the EU is a clear net exporter of this type of products.
([17]) Compound feed is animal feed made by mixing at least two feed materials, with or without additives.

feed additives (e.g., vitamins, amino acids) are heavily imported by the EU, particularly from China that holds an ultra-dominant position on the global market of these substances, and even a quasi-monopoly for some. Therefore, the EU feed, livestock and aquaculture sectors have very limited opportunities to diversify their sourcing, as developed further below in the text. n the other hand, extensive livestock systems, particularly grass-fed ruminants and organic production, rely significantly less on imported feed.

Finally, it is to be underlined that the EU is one of the **most efficient global producers of animal protein in terms of GHG** emissions per unit of output ([18]). Reducing EU animal production [] would largely replace EU animal product consumption with more carbon-intensive imports, increasing the GHG footprint of EU animal product consumption and causing undue disruption to the EU animal product value chain.

Circularity as a driving principle

Overall, plant proteins from a variety of edible and non-edible sources play a significant role in the circular bioeconomy, including when transformed by livestock into food and manure. While several crops with a feed use are also processed for non-feed uses in industry, for energy production, or as food, they still can generate high protein by-products for feed or food. For example, oil from oilseeds can be separated for human or energy use, while the remaining co-products, high in protein, can be used for animal feed or food. **These co-products from processed crops constitute a major source of protein for EU livestock**. They account for around 37% of total livestock protein intake, highlighting the strong interconnection between food, feed, energy and industrial value chains.

Bioenergy policies have a direct effect on the availability of protein for feed as a co-product and on the profitability of EU protein rich crops. . Co-products from EU energy application ([19]) account for 47.2% of all oilseed meals and represent 6.3% of the total feed used in the EU. Co-products from the food and beverage industry account for 6% of the protein intake of EU livestock, though, former foodstuffs account for only 0.7%, due to regulatory constraints related to feed safety. Safely using protein co-products from food processing for feed could be expended as it contributes to the reduction of food waste.

Various protein efficiencies by type of livestock

The protein efficiency of livestock production can be assessed through the conversion rate of feed protein to animal protein. The poultry-egg sector has the highest protein-conversion efficiency, with 3.6 kg of feed protein required to produce 1 kg of animal protein (kg feed protein/kg animal protein), followed by the pig sector with 5.5 kg feed protein/kg animal protein and dairy cow milk sector with 5.8 kg feed protein/kg animal protein. The meat cattle sector uses 15.9 kg feed protein/kg animal protein. The growing relative consumption of poultry meat in a context of decline of the other meats could contribute, to some extent, to reducing the EU's dependence on imported feed by improving the overall efficiency of feed protein utilisation.

Food

In the EU, 64% of protein consumed by humans is animal-based (Figure 4). This share rises to 67% in the USA, while in China, plant-based protein accounts for 59% of human protein consumption. The

([18]) FAO Global Livestock Environmental Assessment Model (GLEAM) foodandagricultureorganization.shinyapps.io/GLEAMV3_Public/.

[19] i.e. oilseed meals obtained from soya bean, rapeseed and sunflower seed crushed in the EU for the production of oils used for energy purposes.

consumption trends over the last decade point to an increased share of animal protein in the diets of Europeans, to the detriment of plant protein ([20]).

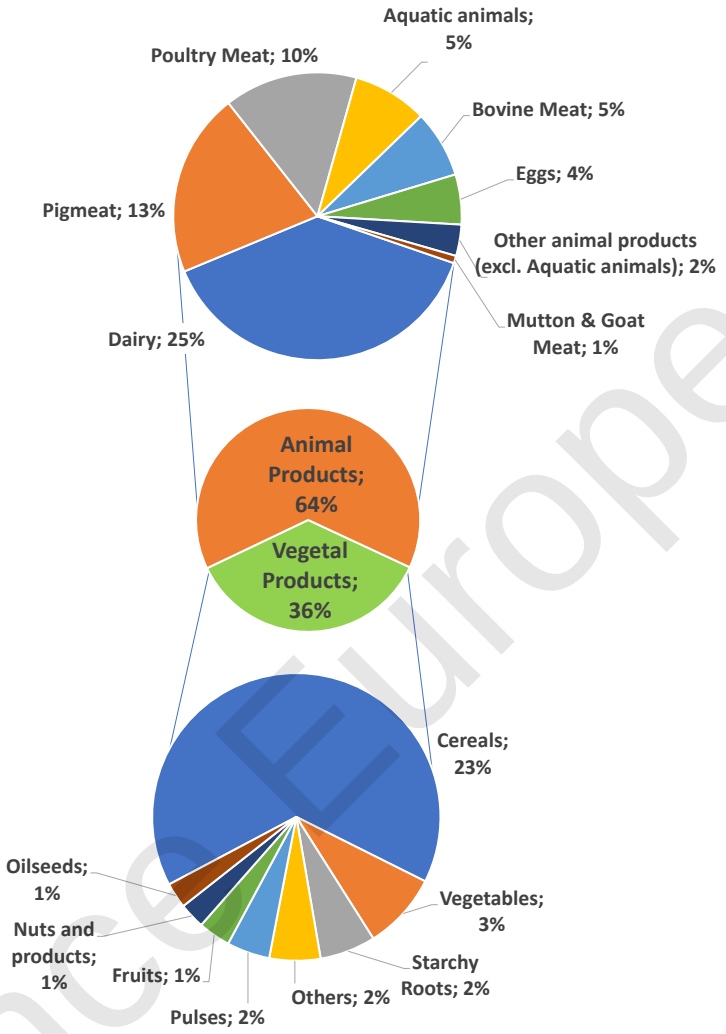

Figure 5 – Share of protein per product in the EU diet
Source: FAO - Food Balances – 2023

Factors influencing current consumption patterns include: (i) cultural traditions and habits; (ii) incomes; (iii) convenience, advertising and marketing; (iv) rising interest in protein-enriched foods; (v) the organisation of supply chains; and (vi) the relative prices of plant versus animal products. Dairy products proteins are likely to experience the largest relative increase in the diets of Europeans, as meat intake declines, with the exception of poultry, followed by eggs and fish. For plant-based protein, the main sources are cereals (23% of protein intake by humans) and fruit and vegetables (4%). Even though they only account for 2% of the protein intake, legumes and pulses are considered an important component of a varied and sustainable diet, and several Member States recommend increasing legume consumption ([21]).

([20]) From 2010 to 2023, the average per-person consumption of animal protein in the EU increased by 6%, while the average consumption of plant-based protein decreased by 4% (*FAO - Food Balances*).
([21]) European Commission, *Legumes and Pulses - Knowledge for policy*, 18 December 2025; European Commission, *Food-Based Dietary Guidelines recommendations for legumes - Knowledge for policy*, 7 November 2025.

As with many foods, a balanced consumption provides an important contribution to a diverse and healthy diet. Diversified diets that include meat from livestock raised on locally adapted feed resources, alongside greater consumption of plant proteins from fruits, vegetables and pulses, could play an important role in the transition towards a more resilient and sustainable food system while supporting viable value chains in the EU. In addition to providing adequate nutrition and enabling positive health outcomes, diets that have a high share of plant-based foods help to support environment and climate objectives.

3. Plant-based and alternative protein sources

Innovation is thriving in the protein domain. The EU has an interest in being a global leader and to drive innovation that supports competitive, sustainable and resilient food systems. At the same time, innovation must be responsible and requires proper assessment as regards its sustainability, as well as social, nutritional and societal considerations. The Lifesciences Strategy recognises that European agriculture and food sectors are a hub for innovation, with new products and value chains that combine safety, sustainability, and social responsibility ([22]).

Currently, there is a variety of **plant-based and alternative protein sources and innovations on the market** for both **food and feed use**. Some of these alternative products are well established and accepted in Europe, such as plant-based protein food and drinks, or products with protein obtained from fermentation or algae. Algae are also used as feed and have promising market potential. Some alternative protein sources, while being available on the food market, are currently mainly accepted as feed, such as insects.

Other alternatives for feed are more novel, such as products based on **precision and biomass fermentation** or proteins extracted from crops and may be subject to specific rules for their placing on the market. Several of these alternatives have the potential to create new circular business models for farmers and the feed industry. Fermentation-based technologies are emerging as a complementary pathway within the broader protein landscape, with potential implications across agricultural value chains. They may create new opportunities for certain feedstocks, agricultural side-streams and feed-related inputs, while contributing to the diversification of protein sources. Their impact on conventional agricultural production is expected to remain limited in the medium term, although more significant effects could emerge over time. The extent to which farmers and rural areas benefit will depend on how value chains are organised, and fermentation-based technologies are expected to coexist with existing agricultural systems. Novel proteins for feed present an area for innovation and contribute to this globally developing market.

[Placeholder for GROW on Biotech ACT II]

As regards food, **plant-based protein food and drinks are expected to have the biggest market potential** given the stable regulatory framework and consumer acceptance compared to other alternative proteins. These plant-based alternative products often aim to replicate the taste, texture, and nutritional profile of traditional animal-based products ([23]), although some have undergone a higher degree of processing compared to animal-based products. Both types of products co-exist in the European market and specific rules on the use of dairy terms and, in the future, meat-related terms are applicable to enhance transparency and ensure that consumers can make well-informed choices.

([22]) European Commission, *Choose Europe for life sciences A strategy to position the EU as the world's most attractive place for life sciences by 2030*, COM(2025) 525 final.
([23]) FAO, *The Plants That Feed the World: baseline data and metrics to inform strategies for the conservation and use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture*, 2023.

Both **plant-based protein products and alternative protein products face several common challenges that will have to be overcome before they are adopted more widely and integrated into EU diets**. Public understanding and acceptance are particularly critical in areas like food technology, where innovation intersects with health and sustainability considerations. Furthermore, affordability, taste, convenience, nutritional aspects and labelling of these products can be additional constraints. Importantly, the **sustainability** and safety of alternative protein products require thorough assessment, as it is for conventional food products. For example, the production processes for several types of alternative proteins are energy intensive, in some cases requiring higher energy inputs than the conventional proteins they could potentially replace ([24]). On the other hand, certain alternative protein products could reduce the risk of zoonotic diseases and antimicrobial resistance ([25]).

From an **economic and social** standpoint, increased sales of plant-based-protein products create opportunities for farmers and rural communities. **Repurposing production and a range of agricultural side streams and co-products** for use in plant-based foods and alternative-protein production for feed could create new revenue for farmers. The diversification of the protein supply creates opportunities for new value chains, for both feed and food.

4. Building a Resilient and Sustainable Protein System in the EU

Scaling up sustainable plant-based protein production faces still significant barriers, despite a number of policy initiatives adopted to date to stimulate its development. The broad consultation of stakeholders identified several constraints, including the lower profitability of protein crops in particular linked to the availability of dedicated knowledge, skills and inputs, an underdeveloped value chain, infrastructure needs such as storage and processing, investment gaps and the need for closer cooperation among actors to de-risk transition decisions.

Action is required at different governance levels and by different stakeholders to accelerate the development of the chain. **Success will hinge on the ability to provide an integrated approach and create the right incentives for the development of both the supply and the demand for protein crops**.

The EU protein system of the future is built on the following pillars which will in turn make circularity and climate action a business case of the farmers:

- Increasing open **strategic autonomy** by expanding **sustainable EU protein supply**;
- Improving the **resilience, competitiveness and preparedness** of the wider EU protein system**;**
- Strenghthening the EU protein value chains by improving **market attractiveness** and **incentivising demand** and promoting local solutions.

4.1. Strengthening policy coordination

A coherent transition depends on stronger consistency between the CAP and the EU's competitiveness, research and innovation, energy, cohesion, environmental, climate, health, public procurement and trade policies, while also ensuring that public policies and private initiatives act jointly across the entire agri-food chain, from production to consumption.

Several actions are already underway but may need to be accelerated and integrated. In particular, as the EU raises its environmental and climate ambitions, its trade policy should ensure a non-

([24]) European Parliament: European Parliamentary Research Service, *Alternative protein sources for food and feed Service*, April 2024.
([25]) UN environment programme, *What's Cooking? An assessment of potential impacts of selected novel alternatives to conventional animal products*, 8 December 2023.

discriminatory framework applying to both domestic and imported products, with greater alignment of production standards. The development of the protein sector has a strong potential to deliver on EU environmental and circularity objectives.

The next multi-annual financial framework creates opportunities to stimulate the EU protein crop sector through **integrated planning**, reducing reliance on imported proteins and to strengthen the EU's open strategic autonomy. It requires value-chain project development that can combine support for protein crops cultivation under the CAP, better territorial integration and development of infrastructure and processing facilities through National and Regional Partnership Plan (NRPP) and finally, scaling up of research and innovation investments through the Horizon Europe Research Framework Programme and the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF). Together with **risk-management instruments** that the Commission is developing, also in cooperation with the EIB, this creates unprecedented opportunities for EU protein crop sector.

[Placeholder for REGIO to add what cohesion currently supports in terms of investments, also RRF]

Several Member States are already advancing initiatives to promote a more sustainable and resilient protein system. These efforts focus on increasing local protein production and use, expanding plant-based consumption, developing alternative proteins, and reinforcing value chains. The Danish Action Plan for Plant-based foods ([26]) provides an example of how Member States can bring together tools at different governance levels that support the value chain for plant-based foods.

With a view to reducing their dependency on imported plant-based protein, Member States are recommended to take action, as further detailed in the subsequent sections, tailored to their needs:

- to promote the integration of protein crops in their crop rotation and diversification,
- to reward the cultivation of protein crops based on their environmental and climate benefits,
- to help farmers in difficulties that produce protein crops, grasses and other herbaceous forage,
- to support investment, innovation, marketing, storage, and risk management for protein crop production,
- to compensate higher costs of production of farmers who move to protein crops,
- to encourage livestock farmers moving to extensification ,
- to incentivise farmers combining the production of crops and livestock,
- to reinforce the role of grasslands,
- to monitor and encourage the use of local feed at farm level or local level and as regards the dependency on imported high protein feed,
- to integrate protein diversification into their generational renewal strategies and young farmers starter pack measures,
- to facilitate collective actions, such as promotion measures, and greater use of contracts between farmers and other actors of the protein crop value chain,
- to strengthen downstream segments of the protein crop value chain through investments in infrastructure, storage and processing capacity,
- to facilitate the marketing of products derived from animals fed with GM-free compound feed based on EU-produced feed materials,
- to mobilise national tools to encourage sustainable and resilient consumer diets,
- to design taxation policies to contribute to the transition to a resilient food system,
- to establish harmonised feed and food protein balance sheets.

([26]) Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries of Denmark, *Danish Action Plan on Plant-Based Foods*, October 2023.

Dedicated Protein Dialogues with Member States will provide a forum to exchange on best practices and monitor the implementation of the Protein Plan. The **annual Food Dialogues**, bringing together consumers, producers, industry, retailers, public authorities, and civil society provide another opportunity for exchanges and agenda setting. [Action 2.2 – dialogue with MS]

4.2. Expanding sustainable EU protein supply

The EU's capacity to increase its strategic autonomy requires:

- Incentives to stimulate protein crop cultivation
- Toolbox of support measures for the farmers
- Strengthening value chains and regional development
- R&I
- Enhancing grassland use and livestock integration

Incentivising farmers to adopt diversified production systems with reduced fertiliser needs

Sufficient incentives, investment support and risk management tools are needed to realise protein diversification. It is for the Member States, guided by Commission's recommendations, to design their plans and strategies for protein diversification and address inherent trade-offs, given the structural constraints in Europe. These policy decisions will have to consider several aspects, including the types of crops, their suitability to agro-climatic conditions in a country, their protein content, "dual" purpose use (food and feed) and ability to be integrated into crop rotation. Certain crops, like soy, pulses and legumes, have a good potential and realistic chances of scaling up. In addition, legumes in a rotation support sustainable farming practices, reducing GHG emissions and enriching soil fertility through nitrogen fixation thereby reducing the need for fertilisers.

Beyond the crop rotation and diversification requirement under the new farm stewardship, Member States can mobilise in the future CAP as proposed by the Commission a range of CAP tools, such as coupled income support (CIS) and the Agri-Environmental and Climate Actions (AECAs), to enhance the attractiveness of protein-rich crops at farm level. CIS levels have been increased and can support development of protein crops. AECAs can support the cultivation of legumes, the use of manure, and the establishment of cover crops, while also promoting organic farming systems that integrate these practices.

As an important novelty with significant potential, the Commission proposal foresees new **transition payments** proposed under the future CAP that can be seen as de-risking instruments. They will help farmers cover investment and adaptation costs associated with introducing protein crops into crop rotations, including new machinery, equipment adjustments, learning costs, and temporary increases in production or labour costs, as well as potential losses linked to lower profitability compared with alternative crops.

The Commission will set **EU-wide benchmarks that will enable the monitoring of improvement in the EU's overall protein strategic autonomy**. The **market observatory for cereals, oilseeds and protein crops** will strengthen its role to facilitate market monitoring and transparency in the protein sector.

Member States will be encouraged through **CAP recommendations** to include measures in their NRP Plans that incentivise the production of legumes, as well as rapeseed and sunflower, supported by adequate advice and monitor the progress achieved.

The **next generation of farmers** plays a key role in accelerating the transition, thanks to their entrepreneurial spirit, access to innovation and longer planning horizon. By supporting their modernisation, diversification, and innovation, the strategy for generational renewal in agriculture aligns with the development of the protein crop sector, contributing to the resilience, sustainability, and

competitiveness of the agri-food system. The Commission will recommend to the **Member States to integrate protein diversification into their generational renewal strategies and young farmers starter pack measures**, to provide sufficient incentives and business opportunities to young farmers.

The role out of **risk management instruments and financial instruments** will further help farmers to take up protein crops in their farming business, as developed in the Livestock strategy. [Action 1.4 – Monitoring use of local feed + EU strategic autonomy benchmark…]

- **Toolbox for enabling farmers to cultivate healthy and resilient protein crops**

In the Vision for Agriculture and Food, the Commission highlighted that farmers need the right toolbox to be able to produce, given the pressures from climate change and animal and plant health diseases. This is even more relevant for protein crops to improve the yields, quality and climate adapted varieties. Breeding programmes for protein crops should therefore focus on developing varieties that combine higher and more stable yields, improved tolerance to climate-related stresses (e.g. drought and extreme weather events), enhanced pest and disease resistance, and better nutritional quality, while preserving genetic diversity ([27]).

Beyond the availability of suitable varieties, plant-health risks and weed control remain key barriers to protein crop adoption. To address this, the Commission proposed simplifying regulatory procedures for plant protection products, accelerating access to biocontrol pesticides, and make renewal processes more efficient and science-based. The Commission has also targeted Horizon Europe investment into plant protection which needs to continue to respond to existing and emerging diseases. Additionally, the genomic techniques regulatory framework has a significant potential in tackling cultivation challenges and bringing more climate-adapted solutions on the market.

Knowledge sharing is key in supporting the wider uptake of protein crops. Cooperatives, EU CAP Networks and Horizon Europe funded thematic and advisory networks play an important role through joint action. Farm advisory services are also essential in supporting farmers.

Access to modern machinery adapted to legumes and other protein crops is essential for precise sowing and harvesting, helping to improve yield reliability and product quality. CAP investments support plays an important role. As these crops are often grown on relatively small areas, cooperatives can facilitate access to specialised equipment by sharing investment costs among farmers.

- **Strengthening value chains and regional capacities to improve market attractiveness**

Better value chain integration and demand generation are key "pull" factors to deliver change.

The CAP post-2027 proposal strengthens the value chain by establishing a dedicated protein crop sector, mandating recognition of producer and interbranch organisations, thereby facilitating the collective actions, such as promotion measures, and requiring Member States to implement protein crop sectoral interventions to support investment, innovation, marketing, storage, and risk management.

It is important that quality is reflected in the price and farmers get fair renumeration. Recent amendments to the Common Market Organisation aiming at strengthening trust across the food and feed chain, will facilitate greater use of contracts between farmers and other actors of the protein crop value chain to reduce risks when switching to those crops by improving price predictability, securing outlets, and clarifying demand by improving price predictability, securing outlets, and clarifying demand.

In addition to CAP income support, the integrated planning and financing under the NRPP offers opportunities to support the development of value chains through **investments that will strengthen the**

([27]) Standing Committee on Agricultural Research, *R&I for alternative protein sources towards strategic autonomy and sustainability in EU protein production*, 6 May 2026.

infrastructure, storage and processing capacity needed to link the supply with the demand. This can be combined with and complemented by support from the ECF that will support the businesses and projects along the entire investment journey through different forms of support (grants, repayable support, blended finance).

Example: Expanding processing capacity for protein crops in the EU would diversify market outlets and support a more territorial livestock distribution with lower environmental impacts. The EU Competitiveness Fund could support investments in feed, food, and biorefinery infrastructure, strengthening resilient value chains based on EU-sourced protein. [Action 3.5 - storage and processing facilities]

Reducing reliance on imported high-protein feed implies preserving the industrial and energy applications of oilseeds, the EU's main domestic source of high-quality feed protein. Advancing biomass use as set out in the bioeconomy strategy will further expand market opportunities.

The Commission already launched engagement with stakeholders to prepare for the new opportunities arising from the future MFF. This work will continue.

Regional development matters greatly to address structural challenges in rural areas and regions such as services, labour shortages, water scarcity and more. The upcoming **Rural Action Plan** and integrated planning under the NRPP can address these concerns. [@SG colleagues: please if we may refer to the upcoming Rural Action Plan]

- **Enhancing grassland use and livestock integration**

The CAP post-2027 maintains strong support for fodder within a more territorial approach to grassland and livestock management, extending CIS to grasses and forage. Through AECAs, Member States can promote extensive systems, sustainable grazing, and greater use of grass in feed. The role of grasslands should be reinforced as they contribute to carbon stock, reduce dependence on imported feed, and help address land abandonment, loss of cultural heritage and increase of natural hazards, specifically wildfire. In addition to grazing, protein extraction from grass can expand its use for monogastric animals.

- **Enabling farmers to access carbon incentives**

In complement to certification methodologies aimed at reducing fertiliser use highlighted in the Fertiliser Action Plan, a certification method is being developed, under the Carbon Removals and Carbon Farming Regulation (CRCF), to recognise carbon removals from converting cropland to grassland, improving grassland management, and reducing N_2O emissions through legume use. This unified framework will allow protein crop farmers to access carbon incentive schemes. Furthermore, the announced review of CRCF framework as regards additionality and scope presents an opportunity to create a true business case for the farmers to engage in carbon farming. [Action 4.7 – Carbon farming]

4.3. Advancing research and innovation to strengthen protein systems

- **Investing in crop innovation and seeds to boost production and resilience**

EU Research Framework Programmes, Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe, have invested over EUR 190 million to support R&I on protein crops, including breeding, intercropping, valorisation of ecosystem services, on-farm processing, value- chains, and feed production to strengthen EU self-sufficiency. Under the Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe', projects also explore protein crops' role in improving soil health through Living Labs. The EU Partnership on Animal Health and Welfare also addresses the topic through animal feeding and feed additives.

Targeted R&I investment is needed to boost protein crop production and use. Priorities include among others, plant breeding and seed development, fertiliser reduction, sustainable crop protection, diversification, and value-chain development, alongside research on grazing systems and feed formulations based on local proteins. R&I is also needed on the processability, sensory quality, nutrition, digestibility, and allergenicity of EU-grown protein crops. Given variability across varieties and growing conditions, standardised quality, risk assessment, and grading methods are essential to support marketing and wider use. Adequate processing technologies and infrastructures for food and feed including on-farm are also necessary to ensure value creation.

Investments in the development of technologies for better valorisation of biomass, including residues and by-products into feed also need to continue, also in cooperation with the private sector.

- **Strengthening collaboration and knowledge transfer across actors**

Collaboration across the value chain is key to scaling innovation. Initiatives such as EIP-AGRI (European Innovation Partnership on agricultural productivity and sustainability), and the EU CAP Network support knowledge exchange, collaborative projects, and best practices, while linking R&I with extension services ensures effective transfer to farmers. Through multi-actor projects, thematic activities and networking initiatives, these platforms will continue to promote good practices in the area of protein crops and disseminate relevant results from projects implemented at Member State level. Their activities will also contribute to dedicated Protein Dialogues with Member States and contribute to the annual Food Dialogues. [Action 4.2 – CAP network]

A comprehensive R&I approach for protein needs to deepen scientific knowledge while ensuring effective integration across disciplines ([28]). Further research and innovation funding is needed to boost the competitiveness, sustainability, and resilience of plant and alternative proteins, building on the future ECF and the next Horizon Europe. The upcoming new Strategic Approach to R&I for agriculture, forests, rural areas and food systems will set the basis to guide future investments to develop new knowledge, practices and tool for the protein sectors. In the long-term areas such as plant protection, breeding, bio-based bioeconomy involving research organisations and private sector further strengthens results uptake.

4.4. Improving the resilience, competitiveness and preparedness of EU protein system

Resilience and competitiveness of EU protein system are strongly linked to efficiencies in feed and breeding and innovation in which EU is a technological leader:

- More efficient livestock systems
- Optimising feeding strategies
- Incentivising regional and local feed
- Diversifying imports while aligning sustainability standards
- Supporting domestic production of feed inputs and additives
- Preparedness and contingency.

- **Adapting livestock systems to prioritise local resources**

The potential for feed demand optimisation lies in better matching of livestock production with regional and local feed production. Building on the current CAP, the CAP post-2027 gives Member States options to further support diversification of livestock production, including extensification, and measures to encourage **greater use of regionally and locally produced plant proteins**, through

([28]) Standing Committee on Agricultural Research, *R&I for alternative protein sources towards strategic autonomy and sustainability in EU protein production*, 6 May 2026.

instruments such as area-based income support, particularly for mixed crop–livestock systems, and increased coupled income support for farmers who combine crop and livestock production. In areas affected by nitrate pollution, the Commission has proposed that Member States will be required to support farmers for extensifying their livestock system or diversifying their activities and, under the new AECA, they will also provide support for the extensification of livestock systems, for example through voluntary management commitments or through the new transition payment. This will enable better use of marginal lands for ruminants, while for monogastrics, the opportunities lie in the better use of co-products from food and biofuels processing as they help to reduce feed-related GHG emissions and land use change competition.

As developed in the Livestock Strategy, optimisation of herd composition and business models in line with the natural resources available at regional level and income diversification for impacted livestock producers in value-added processing, will also help to reduce the EU's dependency on imported plant-based protein.

- **Local feed production**

Reducing EU dependencies on imports has to be accompanied by an effort to lower the costs of European feed production. Replacing imported protein feed with European, regional or local alternatives may increase costs for livestock producers if they are more expensive than imports. While public support can help develop resilient feed value chains, these costs must be absorbed without undermining competitiveness. The Livestock Strategy sets out the pathway which would allow for clear consumer identification, through voluntary labelling and short supply chains, to support this transition. [Action 3.3 - Valorising use of local feed]

Regionally and locally produced feed materials are predominantly genetically modified-free (GM-free), and livestock producers using exclusively local feed may therefore seek to market their products under GM-free labels. However, requirements for the labelling of products from animals fed with GM-free feed differ across Member States, creating barriers to the cross-border marketing of such products within the EU. To encourage the use of locally produced feed materials, Member States and the EU will facilitate the marketing of products derived from animals fed with GM-free compound feed based on EU-produced feed materials. [Action 1.2 - storage of non-genetically modified feed].

Upstream of animal producers, expanding regional processing and storage capacity is key to increasing local feed use. Investment instruments available under the CAP can already support farmers and producer organisations in developing such regional processing and storage infrastructure, such as drying units, biorefineries or logistics platforms. The new ECF ([29]) could further contribute to this objective by boosting investments aiming at improving competitiveness and resilience. [Action 3.5 - storage and processing facilities].

To provide direction to policies and to monitor progress, Member States are recommended to monitor the use of local feed. Furthermore, the Commission will consider the development of **voluntary labels or optional reserved terms** on the origin of feed used for producing the product. [Action 1.3 – Monitor the use of local feed + 3.3. Voluntary labels]

- **Optimising feeding strategies across livestock types**

Ruminants can be fed on grass and help maintain grasslands, while monogastrics can make use of leftovers and co-products from food and agricultural processing that would otherwise go to waste. Feeding strategies are designed to meet changing nutrient requirements, matching genetic improvement and animal health and welfare requirements. However, there is no single solution that would be

([29]) European Commission, *Growth – European Competitiveness Fund: helping Europe invest smarter, compete stronger and respond faster to geopolitical challenges*.

applicable to all production systems, all livestock, and all regions. Nevertheless, optimising feeding strategies could reduce the EU's dependency on imported plant-based proteins, while creating value chains for EU-grown proteins, and improving sustainability. Progress has already been made, as total share of soybean meal in compound feed has been reduced by approximately 20% over past two decades.

As no single approach fits all systems or regions, feed manufacturers play a key role in balancing animals' nutritional requirements, ingredient availability, affordability, and sustainability. They formulate compound feed from a wide range of local and imported feed materials and additives while adapting to environmental, regulatory, and market constraints in order to support optimal livestock performance. This role is particularly important given that compound feed represents a significant share of total livestock feed demand and feed costs are the main economic input in livestock production.

[Placeholder for SANTE to develop on "circular feed" and its potential (also in relation to food waste targets)]

- **Diversifying imports while aligning sustainability standards**

Reliance on protein imports from third countries is likely to remain the case for the near future. While this plan presents concrete steps to boosting EU production towards greater autonomy, in the meantime, diversifying imports helps reduce dependency risks. The EU has strengthened partnerships with key exporters such as Mercosur, the United States, and India, although global supply origins remain limited. The EU will use its agro-food diplomacy to further diversify supply chains and open new supply corridors. [Placeholder for TRADE or external family to add during ISC: to develop more on trade diversification instrument]

The EU's neighbour and accession candidate Ukraine could reduce the EU's protein deficit and make it more agile, with cooperation focused on aligning production standards, particularly for soya. The EU will work with Ukraine to develop those synergies for win-win solutions, such as on soya production, while ensuring level playing field and fair competition. [Action 5.1 – Dialogue with Ukraine]

In terms of better alignment of production standards, several steps have already been taken.

In its Vision for Agriculture and Food, the Commission committed to ensuring that hazardous pesticides banned in the EU are not reintroduced through imports. To support this, the Commission has put forward Food and Feed Omnibus and it launched an impact assessment in November 2025 on aligning production standards for imported products. First steps were already taken ([30]).

Protein production may have important implications in the land use. European legislative framework, including EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and Indirect Land-Use Change (ILUC) address these concerns. However, they may entail cost impacts in the value chain, for farmers and traders, requiring specific attention.

- **Developing domestic production of feed inputs and additives**

Shifts in protein sources and animal diets require adequate feed additives. Using amino acids in feed diets is nowadays the most cost-effective solution to reduce EU high dependency on soya imports, while enabling the reduction of nitrogen emissions and supporting animal health and welfare. Reduced market access to essential amino acids (especially lysine and methionine) would result in higher imports of soya from third countries and more nitrogen released in the environment. Likewise, supplementation of feed with sufficient quantities of vitamins is a prerequisite for animal health & welfare and optimised

([30]) Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/334 of 2 February 2023 has lowered the Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) for the neonicotinoid substances clothianidin and thiamethoxam to the limit of analytical determination (LOD) to protect bees and pollinators.

performances for any existing animal farming system. Deficiency in a single vitamin may be sufficient to affect zootechnical performances, thus impacting on competitiveness of EU livestock eventually undermining EU food autonomy.

The EU has a worrying degree of dependency on third countries, particularly from East Asia, for almost all of the vitamins and amino-acids it needs to feed animals.

The EU's reliance on imported vitamins and amino acids therefore poses critical supply risks. The Commission will work with the Member States in addressing these weaknesses **by protecting and supporting its industrial capacities through the competitiveness and trade tools**, while working on **exploring the potential to reshore the production**:

- **Launch a study assessing the extent of EU dependencies and potential to mitigate those**. [Action 2.4 Study on EU dependencies]
- Prepare projects for the ECF to scale up projects and incentives to EU operators to make full use of the existing production capacity for feed additives/vitamins, ensure continued operation and/or invest in new capacities.
- **Continue simplifying feed additives rules** to enable innovation and market availability.
- Improve the **monitoring of vulnerabilities and identify critical risks** related to feed inputs/additives and develop relevant preparedness options. Following the Niinistö report ([31]), the Commission adopted the European Preparedness Union Strategy ([32]) among others with the objective of reinforcing the resilience of vital societal functions, such as food security.
- In this framework, the **Commission will continue to pay particular attention to the dependencies on food and feed additives within the European Food Security Crisis preparedness and response Mechanism (EFSCM)** and will reflect on different tools such as those related to **critical materials in terms of market transparency, stockpiling, joint procurement or other instruments** to increase resilience to external shocks and to stabilise both availability and affordability.

4.5. Strengthening the EU protein value chains by improving market attractiveness and incentivising demand and promoting local solutions

- Encouraging diversified diets
- Utilising different tools at national and EU level to stimulate demand
- Responsibility and cooperation across the value chain

- **Encouraging diversified diets to support system resilience**

The EU's agrifood system provides citizens with a wealth of safe and high quality-food choices. There is room for a variety of diets following individuals' needs and preferences, which include different sources of plant-based proteins and sustainably produced animal products. Increasing availability of domestic plant-based proteins would increase consumer choice and accessibility. In turn, varied and more balanced diets would help build viable value chains for plant-based and territorially integrated animal products, improve public health outcomes and contribute to EU's climate-environment objectives.

([31]) Special Adviser Niinistö, *Report: Safer Together – Strengthening Europe's Civilian and Military Preparedness and Readiness*, 30 October 2024.
([32]) European Commission, *European Preparedness Union Strategy*, JOIN(2025) 130 final.

Consumer food choices are shaped by food environments, largely driven by price, private actors but influenced by public policies. Tools of national policies such as taxation, education, dietary guidelines, and information on health, climate, environmental, and social impacts can support healthier and diverse diets. Additional levers for public and private actors include pricing, availability, public catering, product composition, and consumer information, including labelling and advertising, as referenced in Commission´s Safe Hearts Plan.

- **Mobilising different EU and national tools to stimulate demand**

In addition to national policies, the EU policy plays an important role. In line with the Commission report on marketing standards for dried legumes and soybeans, the **CAP post-2027 allows the introduction of standards for protein crops to better inform consumers about product origin**. These standards can promote plant-based consumption and support EU campaigns highlighting the health and sustainability benefits of pulses.

The EU will raise awareness about the opportunities for legumes and pulses within its Annual Promotion Work Programme and will integrate those products into the upcoming 'Buy European' campaign. [Action 1.1 – origin labelling] [Action 3.1 – Promotion campaigns]

Public food procurement can drive resilience and sustainability by supporting new supply chains, securing demand for sustainable products, and shaping consumption patterns. The Vision for Agriculture and Food announces a proposal enabling contracting authorities to prioritise "best value" over lowest price, promoting fresh, local, seasonal, and sustainably produced food, while strengthening territorial cohesion, rural vitality, and EU strategic autonomy. Local production of plant-based products, particularly pulses, is well aligned with these objectives and is expected to benefit from this approach. [Elements of Public Procurement review that will be adopted a week before will be added here.] [Action 1.5 – sustainable public procurement requirements]

The EU school scheme (which supports the distribution of milk, fruit and vegetables to millions of school children) can further support sustainable and resilient consumption by raising children's awareness through educational measures of the benefits of pulses and familiarising them with their taste. [Action 3.2 – school scheme]

- **Aligning pricing and taxation to reflect sustainability and resilience costs**

Prices strongly influence consumer choices and can drive the shift to diverse diets. This includes retailer pricing initiatives aligned with the true cost of sustainable and resilient food, supported by labelling practices. Besides pricing, retailers and food industries play an important role by offering options for diversified diets and promoting the more sustainable options.

By designing appropriate taxation policies, Member States also contribute to the transition to a resilient food system. Several MS have already implement VAT schemes with lower rates for healthy products which could also include plant proteins. [Action 3.4 – Taxation policies]

Although not directly eligible to sustainability agreements according to Article 210a CMO, the shift to more food and feed consumption of protein plants / pulses could benefit of initiatives pursuing sustainability objectives and standards that are themselves eligible, such as reduction of losses and uses of nitrogen, biodiversity improvement etc. Farmers and other actors of the chain could reflect on the implementation of agreements restricting competition but indispensable to see such practices implemented on a wider scale.

4.6. Circularity as a business case

- **Biofuels**

The biofuel sector is an important lever for increasing and valorising EU protein production as it provides co-products with high protein content. There is a strong win-win case which allows stimulation of EU protein production, while reducing feed and d energy dependencies.

[Placeholder for DG ENER on the role of first-generation biofuels in the context of the review of the RED. Similarly, the adjustments to the certification framework for low indirect land-use change (ILUC) risk biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels could be considered.]

- **Embracing the bioeconomy**

Integrating a bioeconomy perspective is key to sustainable resource use and unlocking the full potential of EU protein sources in line with the efficient use of biomass objective in the Bioeconomy Strategy. To identify areas for improved resource uses, the Bioeconomy Strategy promotes improved monitoring of biomass flows to enhance transparency across sectors that use biomass as food, feed, fertiliser, energy and other industrial supporting the development of the identified lead markets.

The Commission will work on **developing biomass balance sheets** in order to improve data gaps as regards the availability of coproducts and Member States are offered support by the Commission to establish harmonised feed and food protein balance sheets. [Action 2.1 – feed and food protein balance sheet]

5. Conclusions

The EU protein system's strong reliance on imported high-protein feed reflects a set of interconnected challenges, including underdeveloped protein crop value chains, imported vitamins and amino acids, insufficient competitiveness, limited land availability, environmental pressures, the dependence of certain livestock systems on imported feed, consumption patterns, and barriers to the uptake of alternative proteins.

To address these challenges, the pathway combines coordinated and systemic actions across supply, and feed and food demand. It strengthens EU production by incentivising protein crops through CAP tools, and developing resilient value chains supported by processing infrastructure, greater use of contracts, and targeted investments. At the same time, it promotes diversification of imports, and more efficient and locally based livestock systems, including extensification based on grassland, optimised feeding strategies relying on EU-sourced feed, supported by infrastructure, market incentives, and domestic production of feed inputs.

In parallel, the pathway stimulates demand through more diversified diets, improved food environments, public procurement, labelling, and awareness measures, while advancing research and innovation on crops, alternative proteins, and bioeconomy and circular solutions. These actions are underpinned by stronger policy coordination, alignment with environmental objectives, and enhanced monitoring and dialogue, ensuring a whole-system transition toward a more resilient, sustainable, and competitive EU protein system.

With their entrepreneurial and adaptive attitude, often at the forefront of adopting new technologies, sustainable practices, and diversified business models, young farmers have a pivotal role to play in seizing opportunities linked to the transition to a sustainable and resilient system of protein supply and demand.

Through a supportive policy environment, alongside dedicated innovation, the EU can accelerate the uptake of sustainable practices and move towards the **following benchmarks by 2035** the share of

protein from oilseeds and protein crops originating from the EU and used as feed in the EU that was 25% in 2025 will reach 35% in 2035.

ANNEX: Key Actions and Timeline

1. Developing Protein Crops Value Chains in Europe and Strengthen Farmers' Position

Id	Actions
1.1	Implement marketing standards for protein crops on the labelling of the origin
1.2	Facilitate the marketing of products derived from animals fed with GM-free compound feed based on EU-produced feed materials.
1.3	Monitor the use of local feed.
1.4	Set EU-wide benchmark to monitor the EU's overall protein strategic autonomy
1.5	Improve the uptake of sustainability criteria for public procurement of food, food services, and vending machines, and create lead markets for EU plant-based proteins through the revision of the EU public procurement legislation.

2. Enhancing the Knowledge on the EU Protein Self-sufficiency

Id	Actions
2.1	Issue guidance on harmonised national Feed and Food protein balance sheet.
2.2	Assess the production of protein crops at local level (down to NUTS2) based on Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) data.
2.3	Establish EU protein dialogues with Member States on the implementation of the EU Protein plan
2.4	Launch a study assessing the extent of EU dependencies and potential to mitigate those

3. Incentivising the EU protein value chain

Id	Actions
3.1	Raise awareness of funding opportunities for EU promotion campaigns highlighting the health and sustainability benefits of EU pulses.
3.2	Raise awareness on pulses in educational establishments via the School Scheme to make children familiar with their taste and aspect and aware of their nutritional benefits.
3.3	Facilitating the development of voluntary labels or optional reserved terms that certify that livestock products are produced exclusively using EU, national, regional or local feed in collaboration with the key actors in the supply chain.
3.4	Support Member States in advancing taxation policies that enhance consumer access to resilient and affordable food.
3.5	Explore pathways to invest in storage and processing facilities to develop resilient feed value chains based on EU-sourced or locally produced high-protein feed materials [under the National and Regional Partnership Plans and the European Competitiveness Fund].

4. Improving the Competitiveness of EU Protein Crops and alternative protein

Id	Actions
4.1	Strategic Approach to R&I for agriculture, forests, rural areas and food systems Fund research and innovation to foster the competitiveness, sustainability and resilience of protein crops and alternative proteins.
4.2	Share knowledge and exchange good practices for local feed autonomy and protein crops production, processing and valorisation through the EU CAP network
4.3	Develop a certification methodology for agriculture and agroforestry on mineral soils, including practices that reduce direct and indirect N2O emissions from managed

	agricultural soils by the use of leguminous crops, in the context of the Carbon Removals and Carbon Farming (CRCF) Regulation.

5. Harnessing partnership in the European neighbourhood

Id	Actions
5.1	Advance cooperation with Ukraine as a candidate to EU membership to diversify the supply of protein crops while aligning production standards, including Global Gateway.