

CAP Reform: European Parliament votes for a strong EU agricultural policy

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Future EU agricultural budget to keep 2013 level / Need to guarantee food security and help protect the environment

The European Parliament today sent a clear signal to maintain a strong Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). After the current funding period expires in 2013, the EU's agricultural budget will need to be maintained at that level, MEPs demanded today. In addition, the proven two-pillar model will have to be kept, they said in a Report tabled by EPP Group Agriculture Spokesman, Albert Dess MEP.

"The EU's agricultural policy will need to provide food security in the face of a growing world population. Moreover, the contribution of European farmers is crucial for the protection of the environment. The future common agricultural policy must meet both aims", Mr Dess said.

The European Parliament also called for a simplification of the rules for Europe's farmers. In the future, similar rules should apply both to direct farm payments as well as to the funding programmes for rural development under pillar 2. At the same time, the system for direct payments and the 'cross compliance rules' which farmers have to meet, will have to be simplified, MEPs demanded.

In addition, farmers should be better supported if they contribute to the protection of the environment. For this purpose, the European Parliament called for the introduction of a new incentive system for additional environmental measures (greening) which is to be implemented without the creation of additional bureaucratic measures.

"With today's vote, the European Parliament is sending a clear signal in favour of a strong EU agricultural policy. Now it is the EU Commission's turn. Its legislative proposal must show how food security in Europe will be ensured in the future, and how an adequate livelihood for our farmers, including sufficient planning security, can be maintained", Albert Dess said.