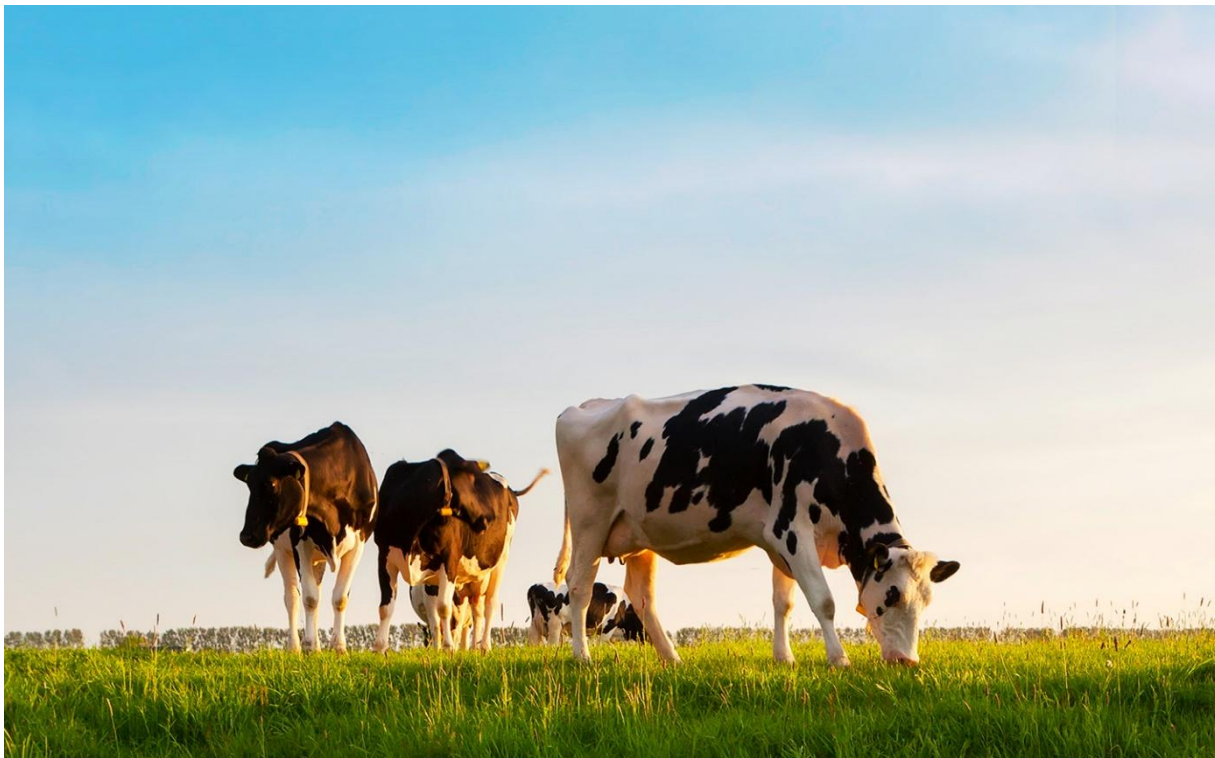


# **TAPP Coalition vision for the future of European livestock**

## **Position Paper EU Livestock Strategy**

ENABLING FINANCIAL POLICIES FOR LIVESTOCK FARMERS



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## Introduction

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 2026 the EU Commission will present its EU Livestock Strategy. In this Position Paper, TAPP Coalition will present EU policy proposals for opportunities to ensure a better future and income for livestock farmers while at the same time diminish the EU livestock greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants and improve animal welfare standards.

TAPP Coalition is a coalition of over 80 partner organisations, including farmer organisations, food companies, catering companies, municipalities (eg the city of Amsterdam) and NGO's working in fields such as climate, health, animal welfare and youth. We represent 15.000 European businesses and over 2,4 million citizens. Our mission is to have a fair, true, higher price for animal proteins (such as meat, dairy), enabling farmers to minimize environmental pollution and to maximize animal welfare standards.

In the coming years, additional investments will be required to comply with evolving animal welfare and environmental standards, further increasing financial pressure on livestock farmers. The annual financing gap in EU agriculture is estimated at over €18 billion according to fi-compass<sup>1</sup>, underlining the scale of unmet investment needs. In this Position Paper, TAPP Coalition presents financing mechanism that can be included in, or linked to the EU Livestock Strategy.

First, the position of TAPP Coalition will be presented. We focus on a new **EU Sustainable Livestock Transition Regulation (SLTR)**, a directive requiring retailers, processors, food-service companies and fast-food chains to contribute to a Livestock Transition Fund in a similar way producers in the EU have to pay for collecting and recycling of waste of their products. The Livestock Transition Fund will pay livestock farmers to reduce their waste emissions (pollution to air, water and soil), in a way to also improve animal welfare standards.

This is finalised by the vision of TAPP Coalition on two proposals relevant to EU livestock farmers related to:

1. Level playing field for VAT rates, related to proteins between countries.
2. A change in the EU public procurement directive, to increase demand for livestock products with highest standards for sustainability and animal welfare.

The paper ends with an attachment with an analysis of the positions of the main stakeholders on the EU Livestock strategy, to give the broad view.

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<sup>1</sup> fi-compass, 2023, Financing gap in the agriculture and agri-food sectors in the EU, p. 17.

## 1. Vision of TAPP Coalition

Europe does not need fewer farmers. Europe needs a livestock sector that is rewarded for delivering climate, biodiversity, public health and animal welfare outcomes.

This can be enabled by a value-chain transition mechanism that allows farmers to earn more money, even with fewer animals, while delivering climate and animal welfare goals. Therefore, it is necessary consumers pay more for meat, dairy and eggs, either by taxes or by other forms of additional price adjustments.

The European Union faces a historic opportunity to create a livestock sector that is economically resilient, environmentally sustainable, and socially legitimate. Current debates often present a false choice between protecting farmers' livelihoods and reducing the environmental and animal welfare impacts of livestock production.

TAPP Coalition proposes a third pathway: a financially supported transition in which livestock farmers are rewarded for producing fewer but higher-value animal products, with higher animal welfare standards and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

The key principle is simple:

**Farmers should earn more from better production (quality), not from producing more animals (quantity).**

To achieve this goal, the EU Livestock Strategy should combine environmental pricing instruments with targeted support mechanisms that enable farmers to invest in environmental and animal welfare standards and - where applicable - voluntarily reduce livestock numbers while maintaining or improving farm income.

Scientific evidence indicates that achieving EU climate, biodiversity, water-quality and animal welfare objectives will require significant reductions in environmental pressures associated with intensive livestock production.

A successful livestock strategy must therefore:

1. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses and other pollution such as nitrogen.
2. Improve animal welfare.
3. Improve farm profitability.
4. Maintain food security.
5. Ensure a level playing field with imports.

## 2. Livestock Transition Fund

A particularly distinctive TAPP Coalition proposal is to start a "**Livestock Transition Fund**" financed by (market based ) sustainability charges on meat, dairy and eggs. That framing tends to resonate with both NGO's ("polluter pays") and farm organizations ("farmer gets paid for the transition"), making it a potentially useful bridge between the Eurogroup for animals/EEB NGO's and COPA-COGECA (farmers/commercial) camps.

This Livestock Transition fund can be developed at both EU level as national level. Specific payments / subsidies to farmers can be paid for environmental, climate and animal welfare goals.

The fund can be financed by national policies, under a new EU Sustainable Livestock Transition Regulation (SLTR).

## 3. EU Sustainable Livestock Transition Regulation (SLTR)

This is not about a **meat tax or a dairy tax**, but about **market-based sustainability payment obligations**. Several routes exist that could potentially be adopted through ordinary legislative procedure (qualified majority voting in the EU Council and a Parliament vote, instead of unanimity vote in the Council in case of fiscal matters).

### **Mandatory Sustainability Contribution in the Food Supply Chain**

The EU could adopt a directive requiring retailers, processors, food-service companies, and fast-food chains to contribute to a Livestock Transition Fund.

The legal basis would not be taxation but:

- environmental policy (Article 192 TFEU),
- internal market rules (Article 114 TFEU),
- agricultural policy.

The mechanism:

- Retailers and food-service companies calculate annual sales volumes of meat and dairy.
- They pay a sustainability contribution per kg sold.
- The contribution is transferred to national or EU livestock transition funds.
- Funds are redistributed to farmers meeting animal welfare, sustainability and emission-reduction criteria.

This resembles:

Extended Producer Responsibility systems for packaging (**Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR)**). This regulation entered into force on 11 February 2025 and generally applies from 12 August 2026 and is about financing the collection, sorting, recycling, and treatment of packaging waste. The PPWR does not set a single EU-wide fee amount. Instead, it sets rules for how EPR fees must be calculated and modulated by national EPR schemes (Article 45(6) on eco-modulated fees). In the PPWR the key principles are that producers must cover the costs of packaging waste management. In a new **EU Sustainable Livestock Transition Regulation (SLTR)**, companies bringing edible livestock products to the EU consumer market can be obliged to cover the costs livestock farmers will have to make to meet high standards for greenhouse gas emission reduction and other pollutants to air, soil or water (waste products from production). Calculation methods are based on true price calculations, monetising external environmental costs (at least for greenhouse gas emissions with 50 euro per ton CO<sub>2</sub> eq). Just like in the PPWR, the actual (eco-modulated) fee schedules remain national. They can include payments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by for instance 30%, or stocking-density reduction premiums, linked to environmental or animal welfare standards.

The obligation falls on companies, not directly on consumers.

Companies may pass costs through to consumers, but legally it is not a tax.

### **Political advantage**

Farm groups often oppose taxes but support:

- retailer contributions,
- value-chain responsibility,
- fair distribution of transition costs.

Environmental NGOs can support it because it internalizes external costs.

### **Example Sustainability Premium Collection**

- Beef burger (2 pieces; supermarket price): €4.99
- Livestock transition contribution: €0.40

Total: €5.39

The supermarket, fast food company or restaurant collects the contribution and remits it to a transition fund.

Legally this could be framed as:

environmental compliance payment, producer responsibility contribution, sectoral fund contribution. Not a tax.

This resembles: recycling fees and renewable energy surcharges.

In the SLTR proposal, there are similarities with EPR but also differences.

In the SLTR proposal it is not the producer (or importer) bringing a product on the market, but the retail organisation or food service company bringing the product to the *consumer* market. An alternative could be to make slaughterhouses and dairy companies and EU importing companies of meat and dairy responsible for the SLTR payment.

In the EPR the waste is generated during and mostly after use, downstream, while in the SLTR the waste emissions are generated upstream, at farm level mostly.

### **Another option : Corporate Due Diligence Route**

#### NEW DIRECTIVE FOOD RESPONSIBILITY SCHEME

Building on the framework created by the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence directive.

Large retailers and food companies could be required to:

- reduce Scope 3 agricultural emissions,
- improve animal welfare in supply chains,
- support supplier transition plans.

A company could comply by paying farmers:

- carbon premiums,
- animal welfare premiums,
- stocking-density reduction premiums (to combine greenhouse gas emission reduction with increasing animal welfare standards that may increase greenhouse gas (and other polluting) emissions per kg food product).

This would effectively create sustainability payments without any consumer tax.

The European Commission could propose a directive establishing a Food Responsibility Scheme, applicable to large food retailers operating within the European Union.

The scheme will apply to retailers that mirror the CSRD thresholds.

Participating companies will annually report the greenhouse gas emissions associated with food products sold, using harmonized methodologies based on existing sustainability reporting requirements and lifecycle assessment standards.

A Climate Responsibility Contribution would then be calculated according to the reported emissions footprint.

Any undertaking required to report greenhouse gas emissions under the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and whose principal activity includes the retail sale of food products shall be subject to the Food Responsibility Scheme.

Under the CSRD and the related European Sustainability Reporting Standards, large companies already report:

- Scope 1 emissions (direct emissions)
- Scope 2 emissions (purchased electricity and energy)
- Scope 3 emissions (value-chain emissions)

For food retailers, Scope 3 is usually by far the largest component because it includes emissions from:

- agricultural production,
- livestock,
- food processing,
- transport,
- packaging,
- waste disposal.

Therefore the emissions data needed for a climate-responsibility contribution is already being generated.

## 4. Pillars for a new Economic Livestock Farming Model

The dominant economic model rewards volume rather than societal outcomes.

As a result:

- Farmers often depend on high stocking densities and narrow profit margins.
- Environmental costs remain externalized.
- Animal welfare improvements are difficult to finance.
- Consumers receive distorted price signals.

The EU should replace this model with one that rewards:

- Lower emissions,
- Higher animal welfare,
- Nature-positive farming,
- Better public health outcomes.

The objective should not be to eliminate livestock farming, but to shift from "more production" to "more value per animal."

### 4.1 EU True Cost Pricing for Livestock Products

#### **Introduce a Gradual Livestock Sustainability Charge**

The EU should establish a sustainability charge reflecting part of the climate, pollution, health and biodiversity costs associated with livestock products. This proposal is a new **EU Sustainable Livestock Transition Regulation (SLTR)**.

Key design principles:

- Introduced gradually over 10 years.
- Differentiated by product and production system.
- Higher charges for products with higher environmental impacts.
- Lower charges for certified low-emission and high-welfare systems.

The charge should not function as a punishment for farmers.

Instead, revenues should be recycled directly into the agricultural transition.

## **Revenue Recycling**

At least 75% of revenues should be returned to the agricultural sector through:

### **Transition Payments from the Livestock Transition Fund**

Farmers receive annual payments for:

- Improving animal welfare;
- Reducing emissions per hectare and farm;
- Restoring biodiversity;
- . Reducing stocking density;
- Extensive grazing systems;
- Agroforestry;
- Organic and regenerative livestock systems;
- Protein crop production;
- Diversification into ecosystem services.

. Young Farmer Transition Grants

Additional support for younger farmers adopting future-proof livestock systems.

The above payments should also be part of the EU agriculture subsidy CAP reform

## **4.2 Animal Welfare Payments**

The EU should establish a dedicated Animal Welfare Payment Scheme under the CAP (with payments also coming from a new Livestock Transition Fund).

Farmers should be rewarded for measurable welfare improvements, including:

- More space per animal; end to cages;
- Outdoor access;
- Longer lifespans;
- Reduced transport times;
- Elimination of routine mutilations.

These payments should become a stable income stream comparable to existing area-based subsidies. This creates a direct business case for reducing stocking densities.

### 4.3 Livestock Transition Contracts

The EU should create voluntary Livestock Transition Contracts.

Farmers would commit to:

- Reducing animal numbers over a period of 5–10 years;
- Meeting welfare standards;
- Achieving emissions reductions.

In return they would receive:

- Guaranteed annual payments;
- Investment support;
- Income stabilization mechanisms.

This approach mirrors successful contracts used in energy and environmental transitions.

### 4.4 Methane, Nitrous Oxide and Carbon Pricing with Farmer Dividend

Nearly all EU countries and the EU signed the Methane Pledge to reduce methane by at least 30% from 2020 levels by 2030, so the EU livestock strategy should include policies to deliver this commitment. At this moment this goal is far away from reality, so additional policies are needed. The proposed EU Livestock Transition Fund and its finance mechanism (SLTR) can contribute, because it will make sure farmers can be rewarded by subsidies for reducing GHG emissions, such as CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O. For methane, it is important to use scientific sound methods for its warming potential. Top climate scientists warn of huge threat to global methane action that gives big methane polluters license to carry on polluting . New Zealand already used this tool to halve its methane reduction targets and Ireland is pushing for the same, while leaked versions of the EU livestock strategy also showed support for this new tool (GWP\*). Farmer organisations claim that large methane emitters only need to stabilise their effects on global warming at current (high) levels, not reduce it, but this is misleading according to 42 top climate scientists (Scientist statement on misuse of new approaches to methane<sup>2</sup>). TAPP Coalition is very worried about the new EU Commission approach and urges the Commission not to use new methane measuring methods.

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<sup>2</sup> [Scientific Statement on Methane - Temperature Neutrality and GWP\\*](#) and <https://grilledmedia.substack.com/p/leak-eu-looks-to-change-how-livestock> and

## **Integrate Agricultural Methane and Nitrous Oxide into Climate Policy**

Agriculture should progressively contribute to climate targets. If the SLTR and Livestock Transition solutions will not be chosen, another pricing and finance policies are needed, to be implemented between 2030-2040: a downstream Agri ETS with CBAM mechanism<sup>3</sup>.

However, farmers should not simply face new costs. Instead:

- Emissions pricing revenues (e.g. national GHG emission taxes for the livestock sector, implemented by national governments like Denmark) should be returned to the sector.
- Low-emission farmers should become net beneficiaries.
- Early adopters should receive transition bonuses.

The objective is to reward innovation rather than punish production.

The EU Carbon Removal and Carbon Farming (CRCF) Certification scheme with payments to farmers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, can be made obligatory for governments to buy credits, to enable farmers to help them reduce emissions. Now, the CRCF scheme is a voluntary system, but in the future it can become mandatory for different actors.

## **4.5 Carbon Border Adjustment for Livestock Products**

European farmers cannot be expected to compete against imports produced under lower environmental standards. The EU should therefore develop:

- Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanisms (CBAM) for livestock products (even when livestock is not yet part of the ETS system; since EU climate laws also lead to higher costs for EU farmers compared to farmers in non-EU countries without such climate laws or with lower climate standards;
- Animal welfare equivalence requirements.

Imported products should face requirements comparable to those imposed on European producers. This protects both climate ambition and European farming.

Mirror clauses in trade agreements are equally important: meat and dairy and eggs imported to the EU should comply to the similar EU regulations for animal welfare and climate / environment / health as in the EU.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://files.myonline.company/3144/2026-02-11/Agri-ETS-letter-to-the-EU-Commission.pdf>

## 4.6 Redirect Harmful Subsidies

Public money should reward public goods. Current support mechanisms often encourage production volume.

CAP reform should gradually shift support toward:

- Animal welfare outcomes;
- Carbon sequestration, greenhouse gas emission reduction;
- Biodiversity restoration;
- Water quality;
- Landscape management.

## 4.7 Consumer Compensation and Food Affordability

Environmental pricing should never disproportionately affect low-income households.

Part of livestock sustainability revenues should therefore fund:

- Healthy food vouchers for low income households;
- Reduced VAT on fruits, vegetables and plant proteins;
- School meal programs;
- Climate dividends for households.

The transition must be socially fair as well as environmentally effective.

## 5. Expected Outcomes by 2040

If implemented together, these measures could enable:

- Significant reductions in livestock-related greenhouse gas emissions;
- Improved water and air quality;
- Higher animal welfare standards across Europe;
- Reduced dependence on imported feed;
- Stronger farm profitability;
- Greater resilience of rural communities.

Most importantly, farmers would gain a viable economic pathway to reduce livestock numbers without sacrificing their livelihoods.

## 6. EU VAT rate policies

VAT rates within the EU member states often differ between animal protein versus plant protein, often favouring animal proteins with a lower VAT rate compared to a plant protein alternative (eg. milk versus oat milk or meat versus meat alternatives).

This situation conflicts with different EU goals:

- Goals to reduce dependencies from foreign imports of animal feed
- Goals to increase demand for protein crops (higher income for EU arable farmers)
- Minimize trade distortions
- EU climate goals
- Public Health goals for a healthy population, for instance in the case of reducing red and processed meat overconsumption (e.g. EU Safe Hearts Plan)
- EU Competition and reducing health care costs for companies and citizens

The EU should encourage its member states to end these VAT differences to give both proteins at least a level playing field. Since the EU has a unanimity vote for fiscal issues, this can be a long term strategy. However the EU Commission can encourage its member states to correct these VAT related trade distortions.

The FAO in its SOFA report 2024 recommends high income countries to implement zero VAT rates on vegetables and fruit and highest VAT rates on meat and dairy. In a similar report in 2024, the World Bank recommended the same, while an 80% majority in the EU parliament also voted for an amendment in the Farm to Fork strategy to do so.

## 7. EU Public Procurement directive on catering

In the summer of 2026, the EU Commission will present a revision for the EU Public Procurement Directive 2014/24/EU. This is why TAPP Coalition wrote a position paper<sup>4</sup> how True Pricing elements can be included in this revision for public procurement of catering services, to increase demand for livestock products with highest standards for sustainability and animal welfare.

A core amendment to Article 67 (award criteria) will be:

Actual text:

Contracting authorities may use life-cycle costing.

New text:

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<sup>4</sup> <https://tappcoalition.eu/nieuws/26529/position-paper-on-true-pricing-within-the-eu-public-procurement-directive>

Contracting authorities **shall** include quantified environmental externalities in the economic evaluation of tenders for food and catering contracts above the EU threshold.

One of the crucial differences is the change from may to shall.

1. For public contracts concerning food supply and catering services, contracting authorities shall include quantified environmental externalities in the life-cycle costing methodology.
2. Such externalities shall include: (a) greenhouse gas emissions and (b) land-use impacts and , where relevant also other indicators like: (c) biodiversity impacts; (d) water-use impacts.
3. The Commission shall adopt harmonized methodologies and recognized datasets for the monetization of environmental externalities through implementing acts.
4. Environmental externalities shall represent a meaningful proportion of the award criteria and shall not be treated as purely optional considerations.

One of the possibilities of quantified environmental externalities can be: conversion to organic milk/meat/eggs and EU guidelines for blending 10-20% organic products into compound processed foods (e.g. 20% organic milk in cheese or 20% organic meat in all hamburgers; just like the EU biodiesel directive for a minimum amount of bio diesel into fossil fuel diesel.

## 8. Conclusion

The debate about livestock should not be framed as a conflict between farmers, environmental objectives, and animal welfare. The real challenge is economic. When markets reward volume rather than value, farmers are pushed toward intensification even when society seeks different outcomes.

The EU Livestock Strategy should therefore focus on correcting market incentives. Through true cost pricing, targeted transition support, animal welfare payments, carbon border measures and CAP reform, Europe can create a livestock sector that is smaller in environmental footprint, higher in welfare standards, and stronger in economic performance.

TAPP Coalition supports a fair transition in which farmers are compensated and rewarded for delivering the public goods that European citizens increasingly demand.

TAPP Coalition recommends excise duties on meat , eggs and dairy for high income countries (at national EU Level) and using tax revenues (partly) for new subsidies for farmers to help them improve sustainability and animal welfare standards.

However for the EU as a whole, such taxes cannot be implemented since fiscal affairs are decided in the EU with unanimity voting and such decisions are not very likely. Therefore, other EU proposals are presented that need a majority vote, such as obligations for European retail companies and food service companies to contribute to a Livestock Transition Fund to pay farmers to reduce their emissions (similar like EU obligations for companies to recycle waste).

## Attachment 1: positions from other EU Stakeholders

### EU LIVESTOCK STRATEGY, COMPARISON OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS JUNE 2026

Issue	Eurogroup for Animals	European Environmental Bureau	COPA-COGECA (EU farmers)	European Commission
Overall vision	Transition away from industrial livestock toward higher-welfare, agroecological systems	Food-system transformation within environmental limits; generally supportive of reducing livestock impacts	Maintain a strong livestock sector while improving sustainability	Balance competitiveness, sustainability, resilience and animal welfare
Livestock numbers	Reduce densities in pollution hotspots; implicitly supports lower livestock intensity in some regions	Generally supports reducing environmental pressures from livestock	Opposes mandatory herds; emphasizes productivity	No explicit reduction target announced
Animal welfare	Central pillar; higher welfare standards and end to factory farming	Supports stronger welfare measures as part of sustainability agenda	Supports welfare improvements but stresses feasibility and competitiveness	Welfare identified as one of the three core pillars
Protein diversification	Strong support for shifting toward plant proteins and reducing feed import dependence	Generally supportive	More focused on domestic feed production and livestock competitiveness	Commission preparing a linked Protein Plan
CAP funding	Redirect support toward public goods, welfare and agroecology	Similar direction, stronger environmental conditionality	Maintain robust livestock support under CAP	Post-2027 CAP expected to be part of the discussion

Emissions and pollution	Reduce stocking densities, strengthen environmental rules, tackle antimicrobial resistance	Strong climate and biodiversity focus	Emphasis on technological solutions and efficiency gains	Sustainability and climate resilience are key objectives
Diet change	Explicitly supports diversification toward plant proteins and healthier diets	Generally supportive of "less and better" animal products	Typically resists demand-side reduction policies	Consumer expectations acknowledged, but no dietary targets announced

## POSITION PAPER CEJA (YOUNG EU FARMERS)

The **European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA)** position paper, presented in June<sup>5</sup>, outlines a strategic, long-term vision to ensure the European livestock sector remains **attractive, viable, and sustainable** for the next generation of farmers (p. 3).

### Strategic Value and Positive Impacts

- **Food Security & Nutrition:** Utilizing marginal lands to convert non-edible biomass into highly nutritious food products (p. 5).
- **Ecosystem Services:** Protecting permanent grasslands acting as natural carbon sinks, utilizing manure to reduce synthetic fertilizer dependence, and supporting biodiversity (p. 4).
- **Rural Preservation:** Preventing land abandonment and sustaining local economies in geographically constrained regions like mountainous areas (p. 5).

### Critical Structural Challenges

- **Generational Renewal:** Low profit margins, high upfront investment costs, and long payback periods make entering the sector highly restrictive for young entrants (pp. 3, 9).
- **Economic Barriers:** Tightening profits driven by skyrocketing input costs, market price volatility, and an uncompensated €18 billion agricultural financing gap in the EU.

In the coming years, additional investments will be required to comply with evolving animal welfare and environmental standards, further increasing financial pressure. However, access to finance remains uneven. The annual financing gap in EU agriculture

<sup>5</sup> [Position-paper-Young-farmers-vision-for-the-future-of-livestock.pdf](#)

is estimated at over €18 billion according to fi-compass<sup>6</sup>, underlining the scale of unmet investment needs.

- **Trade Inequalities:** Asymmetric compliance costs caused by strict EU regulations competing against cheaper imports with less stringent standards (pp. 10, 12).
- **Societal Divides:** Negative public narratives surrounding animal welfare and climate change that overlook on-the-ground farming realities (pp. 7, 20).

#### **Core Recommendations for Action**

- **Fair Supply Chains:** Rebalancing bargaining power to make farmers "price-setters" instead of "price-takers" through written contracts and stronger Unfair Trading Practices (UTPs) enforcement (p. 10).
- **Targeted Financial Support:** Providing accessible entry-level loans, longer repayment periods, and flexible Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) mechanisms for ecosystem services (pp. 7, 10).
- **Accurate Climate Metrics:** Moving away from metrics like GWP100 that overstate short-lived biogenic methane impacts, while avoiding blanket cuts to livestock numbers (p. 18).
- **Fact-Based Public Dialogue:** Combating misinformation through public transparency campaigns and integrating practical farming education to reconnect urban consumers (pp. 20-21).

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<sup>6</sup> 4fi-compass, 2023, Financing gap in the agriculture and agri-food sectors in the EU, p. 17.