



EAPF's Position on the Review of the EU's Agricultural Promotion Policy

Brussels, 9 March 2021

The European Alliance for Plant-based Foods (EAPF) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the public consultation on the Inception Impact Assessment (IIA) on the proposal for a review of the EU's agricultural promotion policy.

Farming is at the inception of the agri-food supply chain: The environmental impact of the food we eat starts from the way the primary ingredients are produced. Therefore, the development of sustainable food systems is intrinsically linked with sustainable farming practices. In this context, the EU promotion policy is an important instrument to showcase how the EU farming sector can drive the sustainability of the whole agri-food chain. To encourage sustainable production and consumption, **the EU should thus focus on promoting less carbon-intensive agricultural practices.**

A shift towards more plant-based diets is a pillar of sustainable food systems¹, fundamental to rebalance the global emissions of the agricultural sector and help the fight against climate change². In fact, including more plant-based foods and less animal-based foods in European diets could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 84%.³

The EU's agricultural promotion policy should therefore proactively encourage plant-based food production and consumption, in line with the Commission's ambition to incentivise better sustainability and quality of agri-food products⁴: The Farm to Fork Strategy recognises the environmental and health benefits of moving towards more plant-based diets⁵ and the European Parliament clearly calls for specific actions to promote plant-based food consumption⁶. More recently, Europe's Beating Cancer Plan explicitly called for increased

¹ ["Food System Impacts on Biodiversity Loss: Three levers for food system transformation in support of nature"](#), Chatham House, 3 February 2021; "Food in the Anthropocene: the EAT-Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems", The Lancet, January 2019, 1-147.

²; Clark, M. A., Domingo, N. G., Colgan, K., Thakrar, S. K., Tilman, D., Lynch, J., ... & Hill, J. D. (2020). "Global food system emissions could preclude achieving the 1.5° and 2° C climate change targets", Science, 370(6517), 705-708; IPCC Report "Climate Change and Land", Section 5, August 2019.

³ Springmann M., Wiebe K., Mason-D'Croz D., Sulser T.B., Rayner M. and Scarborough P., "Health and nutritional aspects of sustainable diet strategies and their association with environmental impacts: a global modelling analysis with country-level detail", The Lancet, 2018 (2), 451-461; [Plant-based meat for a growing world](#), the Good Food Institute, 2019.

⁴ [Trade policy review: An open, sustainable and assertive trade policy](#), 18 February 2021, page 19.

⁵ [A Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system](#), 20 May 2020, page 13.

⁶ Draft report on the Farm to Fork Strategy, ENVI-AGRI Committees, European Parliament, 17 December 2020, page 10.



promotion of plant-based foods and healthy diets as part of the measures for cancer prevention⁷.

Greater incentives for plant-based diets are also aligned with evolving dietary habits: Consumers are increasingly turning towards plant-based foods out of environmental, health and/or ethical concerns⁸. Growing demand is driving the development of the plant-based food sector, which is projected to become a €7.5 billion market in the EU by 2025. Retail sales grew at an average of almost 10% per year between 2010 and 2020⁹, and in some EU countries peaked up by 49% in the last two years¹⁰. The growth of the plant-based food sector would allow farmers to diversify agricultural crops, actively contributing to the EU's better resilience to climate change while opening up new economic opportunities¹¹.

EAPF is in favour of a mix between options 2 and 3 for an EU's agricultural promotion policy that prioritises products – such as plant-based foods – making a direct, positive contribution to the EU sustainability and health goals.

The EU's overarching strategies – such as the Farm to Fork Strategy and Europe's Beating Cancer Plan – should be the reference point for the review of the promotion policy, ensuring maximum alignment across the initiatives. This would in turn maximise the added value of the policy as a tool to encourage consumers to adopt healthier diets and ensure they have access to a variety of sustainable food, including plant-based food.

On top the policy focus, in order to enable a shift towards more plant-based diets, the EU's agricultural promotion policy should **widen the scope of eligible products** listed under Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 1114/2014¹² **to include** plant-based foods such as **pulses as well as plant-based products** made from EU crops. This is in line with the Council's call for an EU Protein Transition Strategy, to stir EU autonomy in the production of plant protein crops for food consumption¹³; it is also critical to further build the resilience of the EU agri-food sector and enable a post-COVID19 green recovery which taps into the sustainability potential of plant-based foods.

⁷ [Europe's Beating Cancer Plan](#), 3 February 2021, page 11.

⁸ BEUC (2020). One bite at a time: Consumers and the transition to sustainable food. Analysis of a survey of European consumers on attitudes towards sustainable food.

⁹ Growth of meat and dairy alternatives is stirring up the European food industry, ING Report, October 2020.

¹⁰ [Plant-based foods in Europe: How big is the market?](#), the Smart Protein project, 25 February 2021.

¹¹ [The development of plant proteins in the European Union](#), 22 November 2018, page 6-7.

¹² [Regulation \(EU\) 1114/2014 on information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries and repealing Council Regulation \(EC\) No 3/2008](#)

¹³ Council's conclusions on the Farm to Fork Strategy, October 2020.



EAPF thus calls on the European Commission to **review the EU's agricultural promotion policy in line with its ambitions set forth in the main overarching strategies, prioritising the promotion of more environmentally-friendly food products, such as plant-based foods**, with the ultimate aim to boost the uptake of sustainable and healthy diets, good for the people and the planet.

The European Alliance for Plant-Based Foods (EAPF) brings together like-minded organisations in the plant-based value chain around a unique mission: To put plant-based foods at the heart of the transition towards more sustainable and healthy food systems. The Alliance represents companies and organisations supporting and promoting plant-based foods.