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### EU agri-food Vision shortsighted on the consumer side

The European Commission [published](#) its roadmap for the agriculture and food sector until 2040 today, laying the ground for future initiatives in the next five years. The Vision follows the [Strategic Dialogue](#), gathering key players across the food supply chain, which had delivered promising results for consumers, including a shared commitment to boost access to healthy and sustainable food. Regrettably, the Vision disappoints on the demand side.

Action to make healthy and more sustainable diets the easy and affordable choice for consumers barely gets a mention and is largely left to individual Member States despite being an [issue of concern for most consumers across Europe](#). The Commission offers instead a yearly dialogue to discuss issues such as product recipes and food affordability. Consumer groups will continue calling on European decisionmakers to ensure progress can still be made in these areas for the next five years.

On a positive note, BEUC welcomes commitments to review animal welfare laws, expand food origin labelling, and enhance the alignment of imports with EU standards.

#### Agustín Reyna, Director General of BEUC, commented:

“The Commission is missing an opportunity to bring the EU closer to consumers. With food pricing soaring in the last years and [record levels of obesity amongst adults and children alike](#), the Vision could have been bolder on food affordability and healthier diets. Think front-of-pack labelling to help consumers quickly spot healthy options in shops or clamping down on unhealthy food ads to help parents teach their children good eating habits. A push is also missing for companies and retailers to make it more attractive for consumers to eat balanced diets with more fruit, vegetables and pulses.”

“Consumers should not be the only ones footing the bill. We couldn’t agree more with the Commission that transition costs must be shared equitably across the food supply chain. However, the actions of the Commission point at the opposite direction by exempting big parts of the agri-food sector from competition rules, designed to protect consumers against illegal cartels. We look to the Agri-Food Chain Observatory to bring further transparency on prices and margins.”

**BEUC, The European Consumer Organisation**

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“No one likes red tape. It is a sound practice to make rules simpler and easier to enforce, when fit for purpose. A word of caution, though: the EU must not throw the baby out with the bathwater getting rid of key laws. This high level of consumer protection and food safety we enjoy in the EU today is non-negotiable and is what makes our food renowned worldwide.”

## Background

BEUC was part of the [Strategic Dialogue](#) which was tasked to develop a shared approach and recommendations for the future of EU food and farming. In July 2024, President Ursula von der Leyen announced that the Commission would lay out a Vision for food and agriculture which would be informed by the Strategic Dialogue’s recommendations.

The [European Board on Agriculture and Food](#) (EBAF) was set up by the European Commission to provide high-level advice on the follow-up of the Strategic Dialogue and to enable a more open dialogue among food supply chain actors, civil society and the Commission. BEUC will be one of its members for the duration of the current Commission mandate.

The [EU Agri-Food Chain Observatory](#) (AFCO) was created by the European Commission to improve transparency in the agri-food supply chain by analysing prices, costs, and the distribution of margins and added value. Aiming to boost trust throughout the supply chain, it brings together 80 members representing national authorities and food chain stakeholders, including BEUC.

## For more information

- BEUC [position](#) on a fair food chain (EC proposal for a targeted amendment to the Common Market Organisation (CMO) Regulation) - 2025
- BEUC [position](#) on food labelling – 2022
- BEUC [consumer survey](#) on sustainable food –2020
- BEUC [report](#) ‘The Illusion of Choice’ on how the food sector is influencing consumer food choices (a collaboration with Eurogroup for Animals and the European Public Health Alliance) - 2023

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