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Consumers expectations need to be better prioritised in the future Common Agricultural Policy, survey shows

A [new survey](#) carried out in eight EU countries [1] shows that the future Common Agricultural Policy should better reflect consumer expectations about food, how it is produced, and by whom. Although most consumers have a generally positive view of the agricultural sector, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is not fully in line with their social and environmental concerns. BEUC and its members call on the EU Commission to heed consumers' concerns in the future revision of the CAP to address societal expectations.

Main takeaways from the survey:

- The future CAP needs to better take into account consumer priorities for European farm subsidies
- Less than one in four consumers surveyed believe that CAP payments are distributed in a fair manner
- A significant number of consumers feel that key social and environmental goals they prioritise have not been met by CAP subsidies. It includes ensuring reasonable prices for consumers and reducing the use of antibiotics and pesticides.

Agustín Reyna, Director General of BEUC, commented:

“Agriculture is a cornerstone of the EU Single market, while the CAP represents a significant part of the EU budget (almost a third). To retain its ‘social license’ the CAP therefore needs to better reflect consumer expectations.

“Consumers want the future CAP to be fairer for farmers. Unsurprisingly, the majority want subsidies to go mostly to small and medium-scale farms as well as young farmers. Farmers who go the extra mile and adopt sustainable practices should also be rewarded, so the next CAP finances a transition that is fair for both consumers and farmers.

“At a time when high costs of living are still pinching for consumers it is worrying that a third report that they find it difficult to deal with food expenses. With nearly 3 in 10 consumers believing that CAP subsidies have not achieved the key goal of ensuring reasonable food prices, we need a serious examination of the role a future CAP might have in securing affordable food for consumers.

BEUC, The European Consumer Organisation

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More findings:

- *Consumer awareness of CAP:* 7 in 10 respondents have heard of the CAP, but few know the details (1 in 10).
- *Food affordability:* A third of consumers (34%) report that they find it difficult to deal with food expenses. Nearly 3 in 10 (29%) believe that CAP subsidies have not at all achieved the goal of ensuring reasonable prices for consumers
- *More sustainable production:* 60% of consumers agree that European subsidies should support the production of healthy and sustainable food only.

Farmers' protests: Almost 8 in 10 consumers are aware of the farmers' protests but many are unaware of their specific claims. Around 6 in 10 believe that 'unfair competition from third country imports' and 'low prices of agricultural products' to be farmers' main concerns. Environmental regulations rank lower in the list of perceived concerns, cited by 4 in 10.

[1] [This survey](#) spans Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain. The field work took place between 21 January 2025 and 10 February 2025, polling around 1,000 respondents per country. The sample was representative of the national population. It is a joint effort between BEUC, ICRT (International Consumer Research and Testing), and nine consumer organisations: Altroconsumo (IT), Arbeiterkammer (AT), Consommation Logement Cadre de Vie (FR), Deco Proteste (PT), Federación de Consumidores y Usuarios (ES), Federacja Konsumentów (PL), Organización de consumidores y Usuarios (ES), UFC – Que Choisir (FR), Verbraucherzentrale Bundesverband (DE), Verein für Konsumenteninformation (AT), and Zveza potrošnikov Slovenije (SL).

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