

Brussels, 7th March 2013

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

On March 13 you will vote in plenary on legislation that will dictate the future of European and global agriculture for the coming decade. Young Friends of the Earth Europe, a network of young people and youth organisations in Europe, have grave concerns about the currently proposed reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy and the effects it will have globally on biodiversity, sustainable farming and young people, particularly young farmers, for the next ten years.

Across Europe, young people are calling for a **more equitable and sustainable agricultural sector**, which **supports small-scale farmers** and **protects biodiversity** in the face of increasingly precarious ecological conditions. Rather than continuing to foster polluting and wasteful industrial agriculture, the European Union needs to support small-scale and organic farming in its member states. **We see a future** where small-scale farmers are able to support themselves and meet the demands of local consumers. **We see a future** where communities have access to safe food which supports local economies and employment. **We see a future** where agriculture protects biodiversity and develops sustainably. The European Union has the opportunity to support such a future - but not by approving a CAP which overwhelmingly benefits large-scale agricultural industry.

The 'Greening' measures proposed by the European Commission were steps towards a more fundamental shift in the agricultural sector, but so far attempts to restructure subsidies, promote crop-rotation and diversification, and install ecological focus areas on farmlands have been sufficiently watered down to render the currently proposed CAP a greenwashed homage to business-as-usual. The position of the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee spells disaster for people and planet.

Under current proposals, subsidies would continue to favour large monocultures and by failing to make the implementation of basic environmental measures compulsory, current proposals would result in over 70% of direct subsidies not being linked to improving the environment. Attempts to ensure greater biodiversity through crop-diversification and rotation have been similarly sabotaged, leading to continued reliance on monocultures which weaken biodiversity, damage the soil, and rely heavily on chemical inputs.

The current proposals will be bad for many farmers and bad for the public. In an age of austerity and ecological upheaval, spending taxpayers money on a CAP with low environmental standards and low public benefits cannot be justified.

In autumn 2012, young people from all over Europe joined together and voiced their concerns on the Common Agricultural Policy. Over a period of 50 days, young people from the Young Friends of the Earth Europe network ran over 30 actions in seven countries, collecting photographs of the messages and actions of young people committed to seeing a Europe with a sustainable and fair farming agriculture system: http://www.flickr.com/photos/youngfoee_recap
It's on behalf of them we write to you and ask you to reject the current proposals and support a CAP which is truly beneficial to the public and the planet.

Yours sincerely,

Young Friends of the Earth Europe

Visions of a fair and sustainable food and agriculture system

A selection of images from the Young Friends of the Earth Europe network, Autumn 2012

<http://www.foeeurope.org/yfoee/reCAP>



'seed bombing' in Madrid, Spain, to support urban biodiversity and more green spaces



Calling for an end to intensive, factory farmed meat and dairy, Bad Nauheim, Germany



More green leisure and urban gardening space Zagreb, Croatia



Handing over recommendations to decision makers, Limassol, Cyprus



Learning to 'grow our own', and to cook and eat seasonal, local food, Wageningen, the Netherlands



Raising public awareness to the current intensive, inhumane and polluting methods of meat and dairy Production, Berlin, Germany.