



PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS ON FARM TO FORK STRATEGY

Attention: this document does not express an AREPO political position. It simply is a first technical analysis by AREPO services.

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1. A NEW CONTEXT: EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

On December 11th 2019, the new Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has presented the [European Green Deal](#), Europe's roadmap for green transition that should help cut emissions, create jobs and open up new opportunities in a fair way.

The [Communication](#) details a comprehensive and ambitious package of measures touching several policy areas, among other **food policy**. In this regard, the document attributes to 'Farm to Fork' strategy the challenge of designing a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system.

This strategy should “set out the regulatory and non-regulatory measures needed to create more efficient, climate-smart systems that provide healthy food, while securing a decent living for EU farmers and fishermen”. In particular, the Communication on the European Green Deal states the ambition to “**make European food [...] the global standard for sustainability**”, defining the following priorities concerning Farm to Fork strategy:

- **Strengthen European farmers and fishermen efforts to tackle climate change, protect the environment and preserve biodiversity**, through the common agricultural and fisheries policies;
- Assure that **at least 40% of the common agricultural policy's overall budget and at least 30% of the Maritime Fisheries Fund for 2021 to 2027 would contribute to climate action**;
- Assure that **national strategic plans for agriculture fully reflect the ambition of the Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy**:
 - leading to the use of **sustainable practices** (i.e. precision agriculture, organic farming, agro-ecology, agro-forestry) and **stricter animal welfare standards**;
 - reflecting an increased level of ambition to **reduce significantly the use and risk of chemical pesticides, as well as the use of fertilisers and antibiotics**;
- Contribute to achieving a **circular economy** by reducing the environmental impact of the food processing and retail sectors;
- **Combat food fraud**, including strengthening enforcement and investigative capacity at EU level;
- Stimulate **sustainable food consumption and promote affordable healthy food for all**:
 - helping consumers choose healthy and sustainable diets and reduce food waste;
 - improving the position of farmers in the value chain.



2. FARM TO FORK STRATEGY

ROADMAP ON FARM TO FORK STRATEGY

On February 17th 2020, the Commission published the [Roadmap on the 'Farm to Fork' strategy](#). It is the first step toward the adoption of the Commission Communication and action plan, scheduled at the end of March 2020.

Overall objective of the strategy: *“accelerate the transition towards a sustainable food system that should have a neutral or positive environmental impact, is capable to adapt to climate change and at the same time contributes to climate change mitigation, ensures food security and creates a food environment which makes healthy diets the easy choice for EU citizens”.*

Specific objectives:

- **Ensure sustainable primary production;**
- **Stimulate sustainable food processing, retail, hospitality and food services' practices;**
- **Promote sustainable food consumption, facilitating the shift towards healthy, sustainable diets;**
- **Reduce food loss and waste.**

The **action plan** will outline a relevant set of *“actions to stimulate sustainable food production and to create new business models for food producers to thrive in a sustainable food system”.*

COMMISSION DRAFT ACTION PLAN ON FARM TO FORK STRATEGY

At the end of January, the press leaked the European Commission (EC) **draft action plan on Farm to Fork strategy on sustainable food systems**. The document **do not represent the official EC proposal and can still be largely modified** before the official publication of the Commission Communication and action plan, scheduled at the end of March 2020.

For this reason, this AREPO document cannot be considered as a final analysis. On the contrary, it is a first technical analysis aiming at reading EC orientations on Farm to Fork strategy and start an internal debate.

The draft action plan is structured in two part. The first part concerns actions related to the **specific objectives** of the strategy, while the second relates to the **enablers** of the strategy, that its governance.

The following analysis will focus on the first part, with a particular attention to the issues related to AREPO mission and working areas. For a full description of objectives and actions consult the draft action plan.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY

1. MAKING FOOD PRODUCTION MORE SUSTAINABLE

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Reduce dependency on chemical pesticides decreasing both use and risk

Setting out a strategy to **reduce dependency on fertilisers** and optimise the use of **nutrients**

Facilitate variety registration and market access of **traditional and local seeds** contributing to agricultural biodiversity and climate resilience

Reduce the use of antimicrobials in agriculture

Improve **animal welfare**

Stimulate the production of more **sustainable feed materials and food**



Evaluate and **revise the marketing standards** to eliminate obstacles for production of sustainable food

Strengthen the **ambition of MS on sustainable food production in CAP national strategic plans**

Expand organic farming supporting transition and maintenance and developing a new action plan

Support primary producers in the transition ←

Under this objectives the draft action plan includes an action concerning the revision of the EU quality scheme legislative framework *“to strengthen the system of geographical indications, as a key part of maintaining high food quality and standards and ensuring that our cultural, gastronomic and local heritage is preserved and certified as authentic across the world”*.

Furthermore, several actions proposed under this objectives could be interesting for GI sector:

- **Grant exemptions under EU competition law to allow actors in a sector to work together** to promote sustainability in supply chains;
- **Support producer position in the food supply chain** creating awareness of the benefits of producer cooperation (including Producer Organisations and Interbranch arrangements) and further improving market transparency in the food chain by collecting and publishing the necessary data to enhance common knowledge on the functioning of the food chain, in particular for more sustainable products;
- **Reinforce advisory services** for producer providing independent technological and scientific advice on sustainable production;
- **Ensure equality of access to education and training** as part of the EU Skills Agenda and the European Education Area.

Plant health

Assess the potential role of new genomic techniques

2. STIMULATE SUSTAINABLE FOOD PROCESSING, RETAIL, HOSPITALITY AND FOOD SERVICES' PRACTICES

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Seek commitments for **sustainable food processing and retail practices** developing EU principles for responsible business conduct in the food supply chain, including commitments for sustainable practices

Reduce over-packaging and improve the sustainability of packaging

3. PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE FOOD CONSUMPTION, FACILITATING THE SHIFT TOWARDS HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE DIETS

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Empower consumers to make sustainable food choices ←

- **Harmonise front-of-pack nutrition labelling** and explore the possibility to make it **mandatory**
- Require **origin indication** for (certain) food products
- Develop a **consumer information system** (EU wide label, single sustainable food logo and/or marketing standards) that reflects the environmental and climate footprint of food products, integrating economic and social aspects, and indicates the origin for certain products
- **Foster the development of short supply chains** with a view to reducing the impact of transport and improving animal welfare
- Consider **different ways of informing consumers on animal welfare** throughout the food chain beyond minimum legal requirements
- Explore the possibility to provide some **food information by digital means** and, if appropriate, follow-up by adopting the relevant measures as foreseen in the Food Information to Consumers Regulation



Develop **EU-wide sustainable dietary guidelines** considering both environmental impacts and nutritional quality, based on a life cycle perspective, to support EU policy decisions and design of effective information and educational tools

Promote healthy and sustainable diets (including consumption of fruit and vegetables), in particular in schools, hospitals and other public organisations, e.g. through targeted policy actions to increase availability and intake of fruit and vegetable, review of EU school schemes and effective use of the EU guidance on green public procurement and on public procurement of food for health

Health and environmental costs of food: launch a project to quantify in economic terms, the environmental and societal costs associated with the production and consumption of the most consumed food products on the European market.

4. REDUCE FOOD LOSS AND WASTE

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: **Implement the new EU action plan on food loss and waste**

5. COMBAT FOOD FRAUD AND STRENGTHEN ENFORCEMENT AND CONTROLS ALONG THE AGRI-FOOD CHAIN

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: **Implement the EU Action Plan on Food fraud**

6. SEEK COMMITMENTS TO ENSURE TRANSITION TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS GLOBALLY

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	Ensure the inclusion of ambitious sustainable food related provisions in all relevant EU bilateral agreements
	Reinforce international cooperation on policies and activities on sustainable food systems

NEXT STEPS

On the 17th of February 2020, the European Commission has published a public consultation on its [‘Farm to Fork’ strategy roadmap](#), which represents the first step toward the adoption of the Commission Communication and action plan, scheduled to be published on the 25th of March 2020. Once the Communication and action plan are published, a second round of consultations will take place.

The European Commission will consult all stakeholders concerned by the future Farm to Fork strategy in order to collect relevant information on the challenges encountered by primary producers, food producers, processing and retail and by citizens. In particular, consultations will aim to identify the main gaps that could be addressed at European Union level and to identify areas where the Union can have added value.

USEFUL LINKS

EU Green Deal: download the full communication [here](#). More documents and explainers available [here](#).

Farm to Fork: [Roadmap on the ‘Farm to Fork’ strategy](#)