

# CAP4Health

EPHA and the post-2020 reform of  
the EU Common Agricultural  
Policy (CAP)

Activity summary | April 2019

european public health alliance





# “Food policies need reframing to shift emphasis from high volumes of outputs to high diversity of crops and nutritional quality of foods produced.”

EAT-Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems<sup>1</sup>

**The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) has a considerable history of advocating for a healthy and sustainable Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).** During the 2013 CAP reform EPHA was member of the European Public Health and Agriculture Consortium (EPHAC),<sup>2</sup> a coalition of health organisations aiming to improve the European Union (EU) agricultural policy’s contribution to public goods such as health, environmental sustainability and equity.<sup>3</sup>

EPHA continued these activities before and during the CAP ‘post-2020’ reform process, in partnership with members, other health organisations and non-health civil society groups.

This document provides an overview of EPHA’s key activities, outputs and positions produced in framework of the CAP’s post-2020 reform round in the period before the EU elections of May 2019. A full collection of stories and activities you will find here: <https://epha.org/category/cap-health>.



# CAP: 11 Ways to Deliver for Better Health

In 2018 EPHA produced the policy briefing “CAP: 11 Ways to Deliver for Better Health” which identifies priority areas where the CAP can contribute to public health. This briefing functions as EPHA’s overarching frame of engagement in the ongoing CAP reform.<sup>4</sup>

The briefing was compiled on the basis of previous work, developments in the scientific evidence base and following consultations with members, experts, policy-makers and civil society partners. In particular, it was guided by insights achieved from a workshop EPHA co-organised during the EAT Forum 2018.<sup>5</sup>

The ‘CAP4Health’ policy portal on EPHA’s website features the briefing, more specific CAP reform proposals and relevant analyses and opinion pieces: <https://epha.org/cap4health>.



EPHA (2018)



## Timeline: CAP reform milestones

EU EPHA

DATE	ACTIVITY
March 2016	<b>Report I A CAP for Healthy Living</b> <sup>6</sup>
February–May 2017	EU public consultation on the CAP <sup>7</sup>
March 2017	Commissioned report (produced by IEEP) I Towards an integrated approach to livestock farming, sustainable diets and the environment: challenges for the Common Agricultural Policy and the UK <sup>8</sup>
May 2017	<b>EPHA response to CAP consultation</b> <sup>9</sup>
November 2017	European Commission Communication: The Future of Food and Farming <sup>10</sup>
February 2018	Joint Letter I The CAP should step up its role in promoting vegetables & fruit <sup>11</sup>
March 2018	Joint Letter I Less and better: Call for policy action on animal farming <sup>12</sup>
April 2018	Suggestions for amendments to AGRI Committee on CAP resolution
May 2018	European Parliament resolution on the future of food and farming <sup>13</sup>
June 2018	European Commission Proposal on CAP Strategic Plans, Impact assessment and other CAP Regulations <sup>14</sup>
June 2018	Event I <b>Leveraging Healthy and Sustainable Diets Through Agricultural Policy Reform</b> <sup>15</sup>
October 2018	European Parliament AGRI Committee draft Report on CAP Strategic Plans <sup>16</sup>
October 2018	<b>Policy Briefing I CAP: 11 Ways to Deliver for Better Health</b> <sup>17</sup>
October 2018	Online <b>CAP4Health Policy Proposals</b> <sup>18</sup>
November 2018	Joint Open Letter I Health & medical associations urge CAP rapporteur to maintain “health” as a policy objective <sup>19</sup>
December 2018	Joint Statement I <b>Civil Society demands on the future Common Agricultural Policy</b> <sup>20</sup>
Nov-Dec 2018	Suggestions for amendments to AGRI & ENVI Committees
December 2018	Deadline for amendments, European Parliament
February 2019	Voting recommendations ENVI Committee
February 2019	Vote in the European Parliament ENVI Committee
March 2019	Analysis I EU’s agricultural policy can be reformed for better health, ENVI vote testifies <sup>21</sup>
March 2019	Articles & social media campaign before AGRI Committee vote: Joint op-ed I <b>Only a nutrition-sensitive CAP can deliver on climate and health</b> <sup>22</sup> I Add an indicator on fruit & vegetables for a future-proof CAP <sup>23</sup> I Stop CAP money for wine promotion <sup>24</sup>
March 2019	Joint Open Letter I To Members of the European Parliament’s Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) voting on the CAP Reform on the 2nd& 8thApril 2019 <sup>25</sup>
March 2019	Voting recommendations AGRI Committee
April 2019	Vote in the European Parliament AGRI Committee



# CAP proposal: new opportunities for health

The European Commission proposal on the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation introduces several new opportunities to pursue better health through the CAP.<sup>26</sup>

## I) Health will be a new CAP objective

One of the nine new 'specific CAP objectives' proposed by the European Commission includes reference to health:

Article 6 (i) "improve the response of EU agriculture to societal demands on food and health, including safe, nutritious and sustainable food, food waste, as well as animal welfare."

## II) Health stakeholders will need to be consulted in the design of national CAP implementation plans

Under the new CAP, Member States will need to design a comprehensive and consistent national CAP implementation strategy. Competent authorities and civil society organisations relevant for the achievement of the CAP's objectives will have to be consulted at the stage of designing these national 'CAP strategic plans'.

## III) The CAP's success will be measured by health-relevant indicators

One of the structural changes proposed by the European Commission is the introduction of a 'performance-oriented' philosophy to the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the CAP.

In practice this means that the new CAP will clarify in more detail which objectives it will pursue and by which indicators policy success will be measured. Many of the proposed objectives and indicators have a direct or indirect link to public health.

### New 'CAP specific objectives': key themes

a) farm income, food security
b) competitiveness, technological innovation
c) better position for farmers in the food value chain
d) climate change
e) management of natural resources
f) biodiversity
g) young farmers, rural business development
h) rural development
i) food and health, including nutrition, food safety, AMR, animal welfare, food sustainability



New indicators: how do they relate to the 11 ways the CAP can deliver for health?	
CAP: 11 ways to deliver for better health	Result indicators in CAP proposal <sup>1</sup>
Minimise antibiotics use	R.36 Limiting antibiotic use R.38 Improving animal welfare
Contribute to clear air	R.19 Improving air quality
Support healthy diets	<i>NONE</i>
Phase out health-incompatible subsidies	n/a
Address socio-economic inequalities	R.6 Redistribution to smaller farms R.7 Enhancing support to farms in areas with specific needs R.30 Generational renewal R.35 Promoting social inclusion
Promote safe and decent work	<i>NONE</i>
Contribute to climate change mitigation	R.13 Reducing emissions in the livestock sector R.14 Carbon storage in soils and biomass R.16 Enhance energy efficiency R.17 Afforested land
Advance the planet's health	R.18 Improving soils R.20 Protecting water quality R.21 Sustainable nutrient management R.22 Sustainable water use R.25 Supporting sustainable forest management R.26 Protecting forest ecosystems R.27 Preserving habitats and species R.28 Supporting Natura 2000 R.29 Preserving landscape features
Limit pesticides use	R.37 Sustainable pesticide use
Ensure sufficient, safe and nutritious food	<i>NONE</i>
Create a policy framework for impact and inclusion	n/a

<sup>1</sup> The result indicators referred to are from the European Commission proposal, without reference to the provisional changes introduced by the European Parliament. The absence of an indicator does not necessarily mean that the CAP has no provisions to address the highlighted issue. It does mean that such issue will probably receive lower priority within CAP strategic plans.



# Advocacy priorities towards the European Parliament

EPHA focused its advocacy priorities towards the European Parliament on two main considerations:

1. The CAP is primarily a financing mechanism that distributes public funds towards the agricultural and forestry sectors. One set of advocacy priorities therefore focused on improving the criteria for the distribution of funds to maximise incentives for public goods and to phase-out health-incompatible subsidies.
2. While in theory the new performance-oriented approach offers important opportunities to deliver on European public goods objectives, there has been widespread agreement, including by the European Court of Auditors,<sup>27</sup> that the proposed delivery model significantly falls short of what would be required for a truly performance-based policy. A second set of advocacy priorities therefore focused on improving the basic design features of the CAP. These priorities were not health-specific, but necessary to allow the public health gains implicit in the proposal to be realised.

EPHA's main focus of advocacy was the **CAP Strategic Plans Regulation**<sup>28</sup>, addressing both Members of the European Parliament's Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) Committee and the Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) Committee.

EPHA also, though to a lesser extent, addressed the **Common Organisation of Markets (CMO) Regulation**.<sup>29</sup> In particular EPHA focused on two main asks:

1. To increase the budget for the fruit and vegetables component of the School scheme;
2. To ensure the nutrition and ingredient labelling of wine follows the same rules as those for non-alcoholic drinks laid down in the Food Information to Consumers Regulation.<sup>30</sup> On this ask EPHA supported a coalition of health organisations led by the European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare).<sup>31</sup>

## Wine labelling under the CAP?

In March 2017 the European Commission adopted a report calling on the alcoholic beverages industry to present within one year a self-regulatory proposal that would ensure adequate information on ingredients and nutrition in order to ensure consumers are informed about the contents of their drinks.<sup>32</sup>

In March 2018 the alcoholic beverages industry presented a proposal, the adequacy of which the European Commission is still assessing.

In the meantime, although not part of the European Commission's CAP proposal, amendments were tabled to the CMO Regulation providing for the mandatory nutrition and ingredient labelling of wines. However, most of the information would be allowed to be provided online.



## 7 advocacy priorities on CAP Strategic Plans

Voted in line with EPHA position

Voted not in line with EPHA position

### 1. Establish clear CAP objectives that unambiguously promote a healthy and sustainable food future

EPHA recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain reference to health and food waste in CAP specific objective (i)</li> <li>Add explicit reference to antimicrobial resistance under CAP specific objective (i)</li> <li>Ensure the CAP focuses on food <i>and nutrition</i> security in objective (a)</li> </ul>
Vote in ENVI	<i>However, reference to nutrition security not adopted</i>
Vote in AGRI	<i>However, reference to nutrition security not adopted</i>

### 2. Improve the CAP's performance-orientation by ensuring Member States define targets in relation to 'impact indicators'

EPHA recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A range of amendments to ensure that Member States also define national targets in relation to 'impact indicators' while drawing-up CAP strategic plans.</li> </ul>
Vote in ENVI	<i>Wide adoption of recommendations</i>
Vote in AGRI	<i>Not adopted</i>

### 3. Add an impact indicator on nutrition

EPHA recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add an impact indicator on nutrition, to ensure CAP strategic plans promote supply and access to fresh fruit and vegetables.</li> </ul>
Vote in ENVI	<i>Amendment not tabled</i>
Vote in AGRI	<i>Amendment tabled, not adopted</i>

### 4. Reserve a significant share of the total CAP budget for measures that promote environmental and health objectives

EPHA recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that a significant share of the CAP budget is reserved for interventions that contribute to environmental health objectives.</li> </ul>
Vote in ENVI	<i>Ambitious share of funding reserved for environmental measures</i>
Vote in AGRI	<i>Small step forward, much lower ambition</i>





## 5. Strengthen provisions to reduce antibiotics use

EPHA recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add the Veterinary Medicines Regulation to conditionality.</li> </ul>
Vote in ENVI	<i>Adopted, together with several other improvements on AMR</i>
Vote in AGRI	<i>Not adopted</i>

## 6. Ensure the effective engagement of competent health authorities and civil society stakeholders in the design and implementation of the CAP

EPHA recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that competent authorities and civil society organisations whose activities relate to the CAP specific objectives are involved in drawing-up national CAP strategic plans.</li> </ul>
Vote in ENVI	<i>Adopted with specific reference to public health organisations</i>
Vote in AGRI	<i>Adopted</i>

## 7. Phase out health-incompatible subsidies

EPHA recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phase out funding for wine promotion</li> </ul>
Vote in ENVI	<i>Adopted near full phase-out of wine promotion subsidies</i>
Vote in AGRI	<i>Wine promotion funding maintained</i>

EPHA recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevent CAP support for large-scale, intensive livestock operations, referring to different provisions under the CAP.</li> </ul>
Vote in ENVI	<i>Adopted significant restrictions</i>
Vote in AGRI	<i>Poor uptake of recommendations</i>

EPHA recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove sugar beet and other sweetener crops from eligibility for coupled voluntary support.</li> </ul>
Vote in ENVI	<i>Adopted</i>
Vote in AGRI	<i>Not adopted</i>

EPHA recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make hectares where the tobacco crop is cultivated ineligible for any CAP support.</li> </ul>
Vote in ENVI	<i>Not adopted</i>
Vote in AGRI	<i>Not adopted</i>



## Next steps?

By early April 2019 all relevant European Parliament committees – including ENVI, which received shared competence on certain articles of the CAP, and the AGRI Committee – the lead committee on the file, managed to vote on all the Regulations that constitute the CAP. Considering the schedule, a confirmatory vote of the European Parliament’s Plenary was no longer possible before the EU elections of May 2019.

As the European Parliament reconvenes for a new session, EPHA will continue its activities of building support for a CAP that promotes health and well-being in the framework of a sustainable, future-proof food system.



[www.eph.org/CAP4Health](http://www.eph.org/CAP4Health)



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## About EPHA

EPHA is a change agent – Europe's leading NGO alliance advocating for better health. We are a dynamic member-led organisation, made up of public health civil society, patient groups, health professionals, and disease groups working together to improve health and strengthen the voice of public health in Europe.

EPHA is a member of, among others, the Social Platform, the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), the Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics, the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue (TACD).

EPHA sits on various EU-level platforms, including the EU Multi-Stakeholder Platforms on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain, the EFSA Stakeholder Platform, DG AGRI Civil Dialogue Groups, and the Better Regulation Watchdog.

EPHA's Transparency register number is 18941013532-08.



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