



# New opportunities for health in European food & agricultural policies

## EVENT REPORT

of webinar held on 11 May, 14.00-15.30 CET

**The revision of the EU Common Agricultural Policy, and the 'Farm to Fork' Strategy for sustainable food systems may offer significant new opportunities for health.**



## This webinar explored:

- (1) What these potential new opportunities are; and
- (2) What is the space for health, and also non-health organisations and actors to make use of these opportunities, especially at national level.

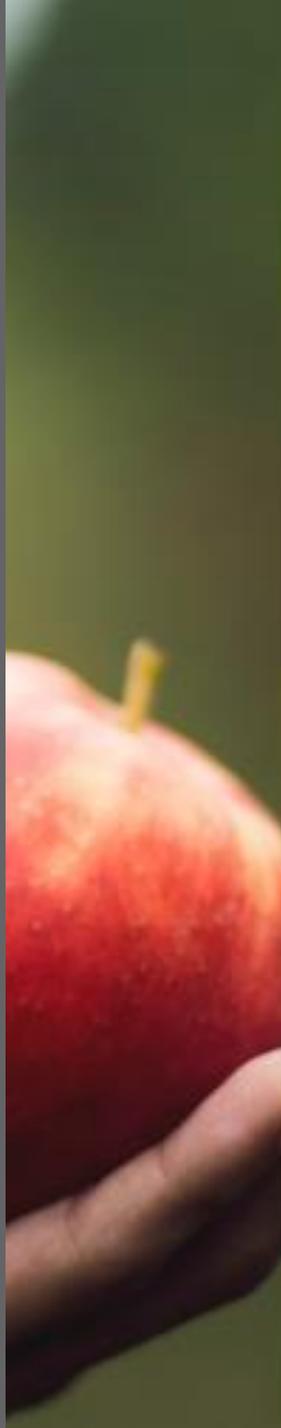


**This webinar 'report' contains the slides used, an overview of the questions posed and responses provided, and recommendations by organisers based on the discussion.**



# Programme

Moderated by Nikolai Pushkarev,  
European Public Health Alliance



**14.00 - 14.05 INTRODUCTION – WHY THIS WEBINAR?**

**14.05 - 14.20 WHAT IS THE 'FARM TO FORK' STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS?**

Rada Chehlarova, European Commission, DG SANTE

**14.20 - 14.35 WHAT IS NEW FOR HEALTH UNDER THE REVISED EU COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY (CAP)?**

Alisa Tiganj, European Commission, DG AGRI

**14.35 - 14.50 IN-DEPTH: RAPID REVIEW OF PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EUROPEAN AGRICULTURE**

Urška Erklavec, Food and Nutrition Section, European Public Health Association (EUPHA)

**14.50 - 15.25 ADDING A STRONGER HEALTH DIMENSION TO YOUR COUNTRY'S CAP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**What are the main components of a national CAP strategic plan?**

Aurélie Catallo, Coordinator, Plateforme Pour une autre PAC (France)

**How to shape national CAP strategic plans to pursue environmental health objectives? An example.**

Célia Nyssens, Policy Officer for Agriculture, European Environmental Bureau

**How to shape national CAP strategic plans to pursue nutrition objectives? An example.**

Nikolai Pushkarev, Policy Coordinator Food Systems & NCD Prevention, European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)

**15.25 - 15.30 CONCLUSIONS**

Dr. Christopher Birt, Food and Nutrition Section, European Public Health Association (EUPHA)

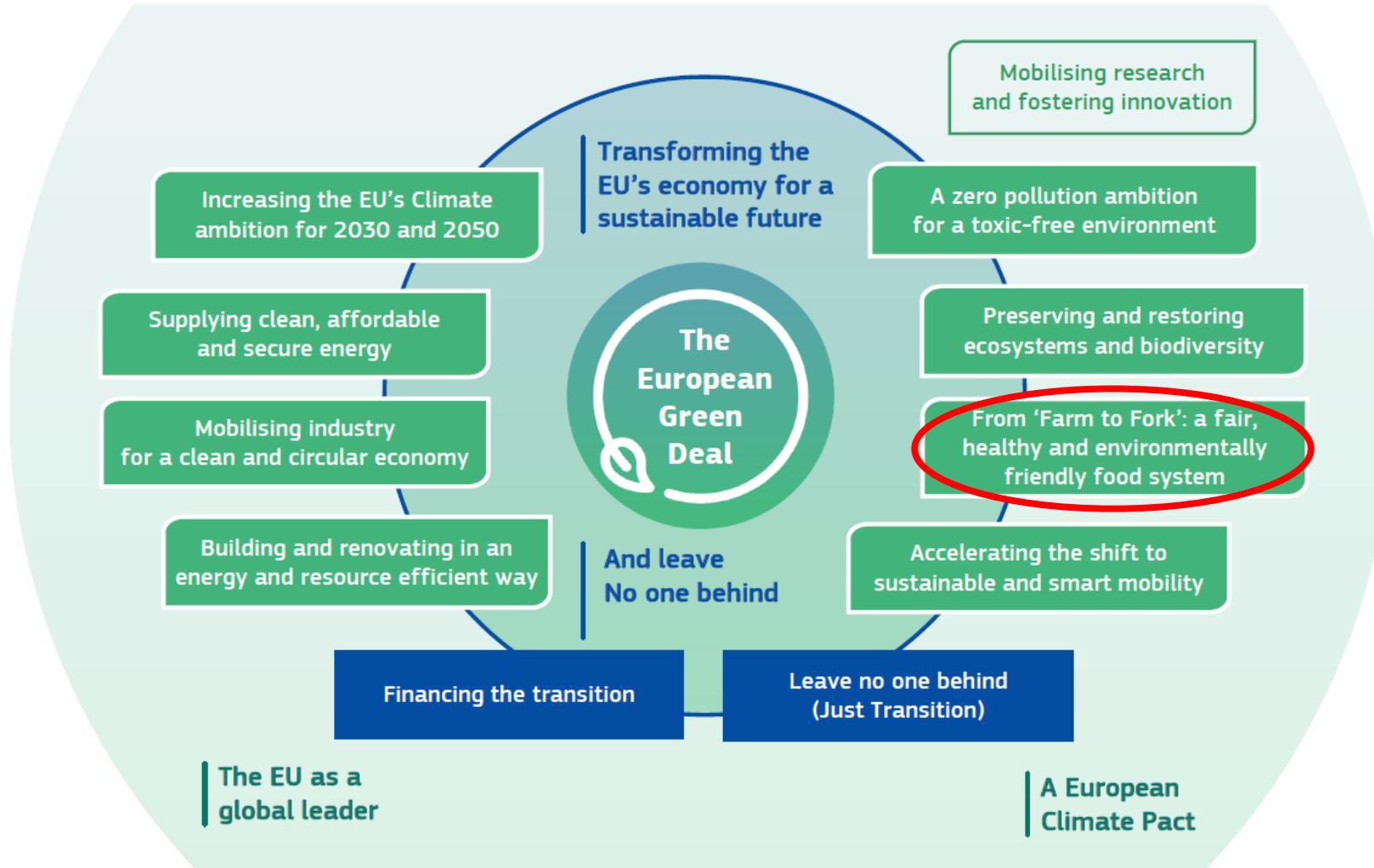


# *What is the 'Farm to Fork' Strategy for sustainable food systems?*

EPHA Webinar - 11 May 2020

*Rada CHEHLAROVA, Policy officer  
DG SANTE Unit E1*

# The European Green Deal



# Impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the 'Farm to Fork' Strategy

- Adoption date of the Strategy postponed due to the current crisis
- The current crisis shows:
  - The importance of a **robust** and **resilient food system** capable of ensuring access to a sufficient supply of affordable food for citizens.

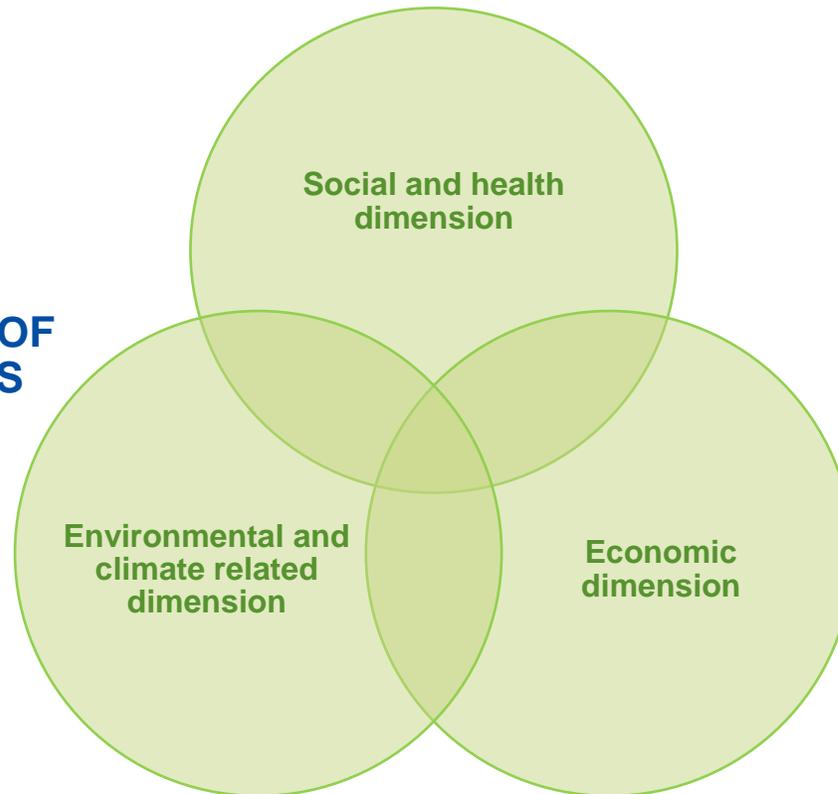


- The importance of a **good health status** of people as the COVID-19 pandemic has been severely affecting people who have serious underlying medical conditions such as diabetes, serious heart conditions or severe obesity.



**Farm to Fork' strategy overall aim remains relevant in the current crisis as no food system can be resilient in the long term if it is unsustainable**

**THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS**



# Stimulate sustainable production & consumption from 'Farm to Fork'

- Primary production (CAP, CFP, animal welfare, organic farming, pesticides, fertilisers, AMR, ...)
- Food processing, distribution, food services (packaging, transport, storage...)
- Consumers' empowerment (food information /awareness/ behavioural change/digital means...)
- Food loss and waste (prevention, valorisation)
- Combat food fraud
- International dimension (support global transition)

# Transition to Sustainable food systems - Horizontal enablers

- Role of research & innovation in driving the transition
- Role of advisory services to accelerate the transition
- Financial support to speed up investments and support actions
- Inclusivity /partnerships/ broad societal consensus in favour of sustainable food systems
- Cooperation across governance levels (Role of cities and rural/coastal communities) and policy areas

# Timeline

- **Targeted consultations – Q1 2020**
- **Feedback on the Roadmap** : 654 contributions received between 17 February and 20 March 2020
- **Report Group of Chief Scientific Advisors:**  
Towards a sustainable food system (March 2020)
- **Farm to Fork strategy** - Communication and action plan: planned to be adopted on 20 May 2020.
- From **May 2020 onwards**: elaboration of actions as included in the Farm to Fork action plan
- Further consultation on individual initiatives announced in the Action Plan

# Thank you



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Slide 03: visual on the left, source: Image by Wokandapix from Pixabay





# New opportunities for health in European food & agricultural policies

Q&A

# Questions & Comments – Farm to Fork (F2F) Strategy

- Will there be sufficient **budget** to implement the F2F Strategy?
- How will the Commission ensure the Strategy, as well as the European Green Deal, is a **priority** for Member States that are now busy dealing with the COVID-19 crisis?
- How will the Commission ensure **coherence** between the national CAP Strategic Plans and the F2F Strategy?
- What will be the "lessons learned" from the **COVID** pandemic in the F2F Strategy?
- Will the Strategy also address the fact that (intensive) **livestock farming** and wildlife trade causes an increased risk for zoonotic spillover of different pathogens and thus causes an increased risk for pandemics? And will the Strategy be adapted to address this risk?
- What role is envisaged for various **expert groups** and EU platforms, for instance the EU Diet Platform which is dormant now?
- Will **Brexit** affect the Strategy?
- Which measures are foreseen in the Strategy to address the **food environment** in the way that makes the healthy and sustainable food choice the easy one?
- The Strategy is expected to propose reductions in **pesticides and fertilizers** use, have calculations been made about potential reductions in yields?
- How will F2F influence the post-2020 **EU-Africa Caribbean Pacific (ACP)** relations given the agricultural imports to the EU from the ACP countries?



# Responses\* – F2F Strategy

- **Financing:** The EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) will be the main tools to financially support farmers and fishers in their efforts to enhance the sustainability of food systems in line with F2F priorities. At the same time, not all measure proposed in the F2F Strategy will have budgetary consequences.
- **F2F alignment with CAP:** The ambitions of the F2F Strategy and European Green Deal will have to be taken into account in the drafting of national CAP Strategic Plans. The F2F Strategy needs to be adopted in time to ensure it can provide this guiding function. Further details on this will be provided in the next intervention.
- **Content-related questions:** Please refer to the F2F Strategy, published on 20 May.

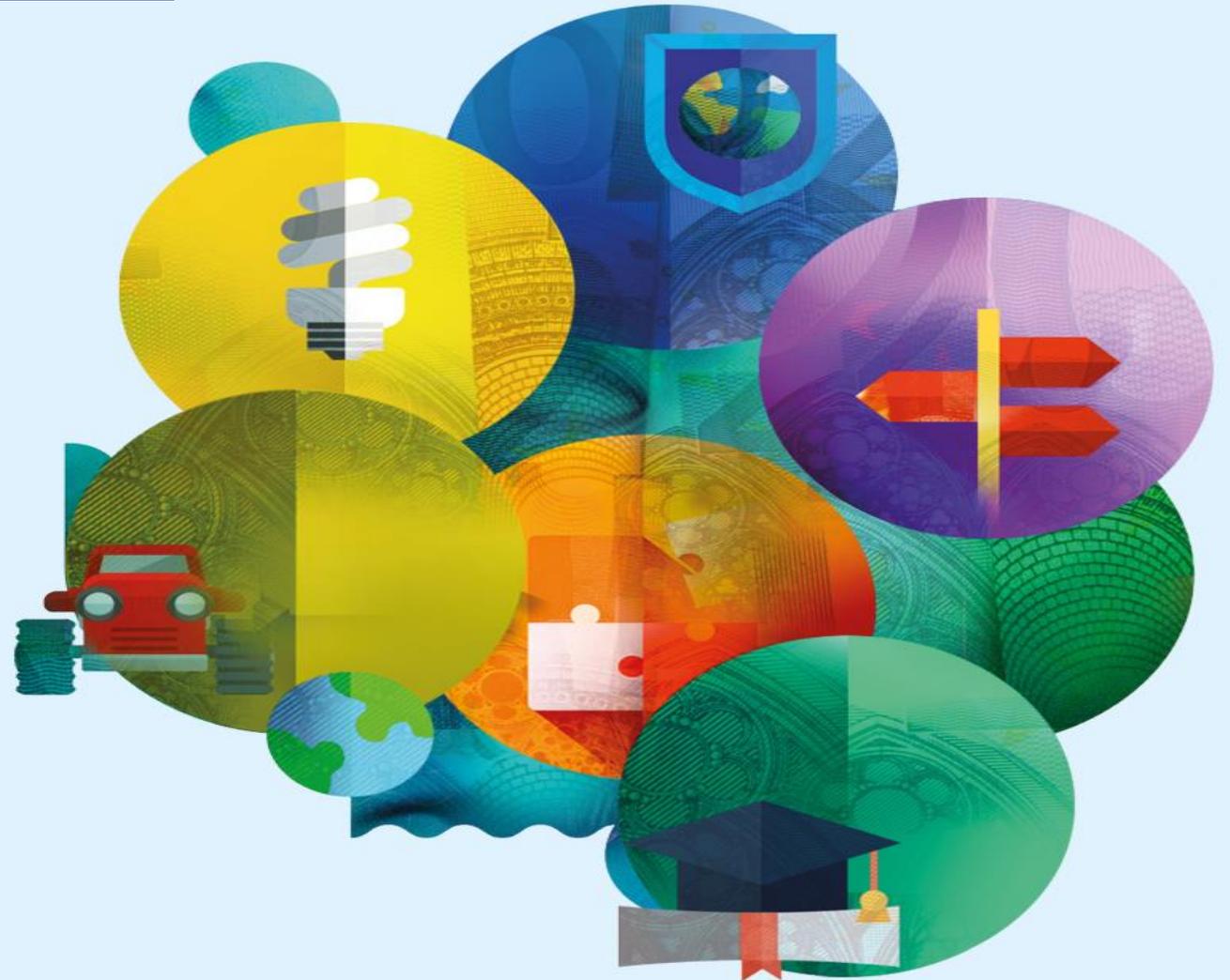
*\* These summary responses can be attributed to authors only.*



# What is new for health under the revised Common Agricultural Policy?

EPHA webinar

*Alisa Tiganj*  
*DG AGRI*





# OBJECTIVES

Commission political priorities  
Sustainable Development Goals  
Paris climate agreement

Art. 39 TFEU

<b>General Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Foster a smart, resilient and diversified agricultural sector ensuring food security;</li><li>▪ Bolster environmental care and climate action and to contribute to the environmental- and climate-related objectives of the Union;</li><li>▪ Strengthen the socio-economic fabric of rural areas</li></ul>
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<b>Specific Objectives</b>	<b>Economic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Support viable farm income and resilience across the Union to enhance food security</li><li>▪ Enhance market orientation and increase competitiveness, including greater focus on research, technology and digitalisation</li><li>▪ Improve the farmers' position in the value chain</li></ul>	<b>Environment &amp; Climate</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as sustainable energy</li><li>▪ Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources e.g. water/soil/air</li><li>▪ Contribute to the protection of biodiversity, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes</li></ul>	<b>Social</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Attract young farmers and facilitate business development in rural areas;</li><li>▪ Promote employment, growth, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including bio-economy and sustainable forestry;</li><li>▪ <b>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</b></li></ul>
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<b>Cross-Cutting Objectives</b>	<b>Sustainability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Further improve sustainable development of farming, food and rural areas</li></ul>
	<b>Simplification</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Ensure simplification and performance of CAP support</li></ul>
	<b>Modernisation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Foster and share knowledge, innovation, digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas and encourage uptake</li></ul>



# REPLYING TO SOCIETAL DEMANDS ON FOOD AND HEALTH

- Specific objective concerning food and health, including safe, nutritious and sustainable food, food waste, as well as animal welfare.
- New objective for the operational programmes of F&V Producer Organisations: "increasing consumption", with a top-up
- EU school F&V and milk scheme is kept
- Enhanced conditionality (covering also food safety, animal and plant health and animal welfare) and Farm Advisory System (e.g. practices preventing the development of antimicrobial resistance).
- Payments for commitments beyond the minimum requirements available for fertiliser and plant protection products use, animal welfare, health and biosecurity; organic farming, participation in EU quality schemes, Farm Advisory.





# New opportunities for health in European food & agricultural policies

Q&A

# Questions & Comments – Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

- Will the CAP reform proposal be **adapted** in light of the new priorities introduced by the European Green Deal and F2F?
- Will there be an **economic impact** for producers from the reduction of pesticides and fertilizers?
- Will the national CAP Strategic Plans be expected to contain a **health impact assessment**?
- Will the CAP directly target **nutrition**, including e.g. targets for salt, sugar and fat reduction?
- Will the Commission publish clear **criteria** for assessing and approving the national CAP Strategic Plans?
- Will there be concrete goals to reduce the production and consumption of **animal-based products** (for example reduction of 50% by 2050)?
- How will the Commission control the **involvement of NGOs** in the elaboration of national CAP Strategic Plans, and what will be the consequences when governments do not involve organisations as requested?
- Should food be considered an **essential sector** (like health), for which we should re-localise the production where possible and guarantee fair prices for farmers?
- Will EU policy on **genetically modified organisms (GMOs)** be modified?



# Responses\* – Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

- **Will there be a new CAP proposal?** The Commission is performing an analysis on how the CAP should integrate the new priorities introduced by the European Green Deal and the F2F Strategy. This analysis should accompany the publication of the F2F Strategy and will answer whether or not the proposal will be adapted.
- **Will there be guidance on how to use CAP for nutrition?** The objective on food and health has a wide scope and countries have a wide margin to interpret it. The Commission has its own analysis of expectations, but will not prevent countries to go beyond and address additional issues. Countries need to assess their needs and propose ways to address them. The Commission will support countries in this.
- **Ensuring meaningful consultation:** A new article provides the basis for a wide national consultation on CAP Strategic Plans. The Commission is there to accompany governments in this. It is difficult at this stage to draw conclusions on the extent to which the article, which is still a proposal, is put into practice. If organisations experience difficulties in getting consulted, they should address these issues to national governments. Further down the process conclusions can be drawn on the implementation of this provision.

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**EUROPEAN  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
WEEK**

# IN-DEPTH: RAPID REVIEW OF PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EUROPEAN AGRICULTURE

Urška Erklavec

Food and Nutrition Section,

European Public Health Association (EUPHA)

**WEBINAR: NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTH IN EUROPEAN FOOD & AGRICULTURAL POLICIES**

**11 MAY 2020 | 14.00 - 15.30**

# Why this review?

- Agricultural policy has impact on several health outcomes like **antibiotic resistant infections**, health of **farm workers**, poor **air quality** and unhealthy **diets** which lead to several non-communicable diseases (respiratory, diabetes, heart disease)
- Messages of scientists and organisations to policy makers
- CAP post-2020 includes a **health specific objective** to 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
- CAP accounts for 34.5% of the 2020 EU budget (EUR 58.12 billion)
- EU **Farm to Fork Strategy** coming out on 20th May 2020
- More public health experts should take part **to make health a more visible and important objective**



# Pesticides and food safety

- **Pesticides:** reduce use and improve data collection to determine risk areas, groups, and factors
- **Food safety:** leverage audit and inspection information into corrective actions
- **AMR:** minimize need for therapeutic drugs, reserve certain antibiotics for human use and support farmers in adopting low-antibiotics farming methods
- transition plan towards a lower **livestock** product consumption (**GHG emissions and NH3 emissions**): economic incentives to reward the effective reductions with farming practices and interventions



# Livestock and AMR

- promote **food systems thinking** at all levels
- build **integrated food policies** under participatory governance
- **assess the impact of policy interventions on dietary changes** and consequent effects on public health
- More **horticulture support** based on the evidence of the advantages of consumers eating **more plant-based diets**
- EU should require Member States to develop **Healthy Diet Plans** (covering public procurement, urban planning, fiscal and social policies, marketing, and nutrition education) **as a condition for unlocking CAP payments**



- Europe as heaviest drinking region in the world. **Alcohol** is 5th leading cause of death and disability worldwide: **end support for wine promotion** measures and end its preferential treatment
- Agriculture specific **labour standards** should be built into the CAP (training for employees, payment of adequate wages, observance of health and safety standards)
- ensuring the progressive **capping of direct payments**, phasing out historical levels of support when calculating current payment levels, **supporting rural economic** opportunities for farm income diversification, supporting programmes to **improve access to healthcare and social** services in socio-economically underprivileged rural areas



- **Multi-disciplinary research, evidence-based policies, multi-dimensional evaluation frameworks** (e.g., Health Impact Assessments)
- Policy framework made with **mandatory involvement of competent authorities and stakeholders from all areas**, including public health
- Quality assurance mechanisms **to prevent conflicts of interest**
- Transparent accountability mechanisms **to link achievement of targets and objectives to financial allocations.**
- New monitoring tools and policy evaluation methodologies should be elaborated to **improve the performance-orientation of the policy in the future.**





# New opportunities for health in European food & agricultural policies

Q&A

# Questions & comments – Health recommendations on CAP

- **Sugar** should no longer be supported – it is already too cheap. Voluntary coupled support payments should be ended for sugar, meat and wine.
- How can healthier **plant-based diets** be promoted if the meat and dairy industrial farms receive most of the subsidies?
- **Health impact assessment** is an interesting addition. What requirements for impact assessment are there for national CAP Strategic Plans?
- Are you aware of recent **health impact assessments** on agriculture?
- Even better is to have a **Health Equity Impact Assessment**, though of course it would already be a game-changer if health impact assessments would need to be conducted on a mandatory basis.



# What are the main components of a national CAP strategic plan?

**Aurélie Catallo**

Coordinator, Plateforme Pour une autre PAC (France)



# 1. Diagnosis

As regards the specific objective I concerning “societal demands on food and health”

## a) State of play of the sector

⇒ Description of the current situation in the country as regards health, food safety, nutrition, antibiotics use, food quality, diet patterns, etc.

## b) SWOT analysis

⇒ Identification of positive and negative trends: expectation of consumers, use of pesticides, national tools already in place as regards animal welfare, etc.

## c) Assessment and hierarchization of needs

⇒ List of objectives that should be fulfilled by future CAP measures, such as strengthening farms resilience to plant or animal diseases, improving coherence with national dietary guidelines, etc.



## 2. Definitions + conditionnality

- National version / application of definitions listed in the common CAP regulation:
  - ⇒ For instance, “permanent grasslands” = Will pastoral animals, fed not only with grass but also with shrubs, tree leaves, etc., be eligible to CAP payments ?
- National implementation of each rule of conditionnality:
  - ⇒ Rules concerning food safety (e.g. prohibition on the use in stockfarming of certain substances having a hormonal or thyrostatic action and betaagonists), registration of animals (e.g. labelling of beef and beef products), animal diseases (e.g. rules for the prevention, control and eradication of certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies), plant protection products (e.g. handling and storage of pesticides and disposal of remnants)

# 3. Interventions

- Description of:
  - Territorial scope
  - Which objectives it targets
  - Chosen result indicators
  - Beneficiaries
  - Eligibility conditions
  - Support rates
  - Annual planned outputs
  - Etc.
- For each measure of the future CAP, such as:
  - Ecoscheme
  - Coupled aid (to animals or legumes for instance)
  - Organic farming
  - Agro-environmental schemes
  - Etc.



# 4. Performance framework

- Common indicators chosen at EU level. For instance:
    - Impact indicator = I.26 Limiting antibiotic use in agriculture: sales/use in food producing animals
    - Result indicator = R.37 Sustainable pesticide use: Share of agricultural land concerned by supported specific actions which lead to a sustainable use of pesticides in order to reduce risks and impacts of pesticides
  - Member States could maybe add other indicators in their CAP strategic plans, to better monitor some impacts/results/outputs
- ⇒ For instance, reduction of the use of fertilizers or reduction of livestock density



# 5. Governance, including involvement of stakeholders

- Transparent procedures
- Effective involvement of “relevant public authorities”
  - ⇒ This could include health authorities.
- Partners to be involved in the preparation and the monitoring of the CAP Strategic Plans, including representatives of the civil society.
  - ⇒ This could include health and consumers NGOs.





# New opportunities for health in European food & agricultural policies

Q&A

# Questions & comments – National CAP Strategic Plans

- Is there any guidance for national CAP Strategic Plans about cooperation with **industry actors**?
- It was mentioned that Member States could **add other indicators** above those in the CAP Regulation. Is there any suggestive list of indicators for the consideration of national policy-makers that they could choose from? Or does this purely rely on the initiative of Member States?



# Responses\* – National CAP Strategic Plans

- **How best to add new indicators?** Whether countries can introduce national indicators and targets in addition to the ones that will feature in the the CAP Regulation is an ambiguous question. Even if possible, many countries consider that there are already too many indicators so many will try to reduce indicators rather than add. Likely the best way to have new indicators reflected in CAP Strategic Plans, such as on health, is to include them at EU level, while the proposal is still being discussed and amendments remain possible. In this way all countries would have to fulfill them, and one would not have to rely on the good will of individual countries to add issues.
- **Guidance for cooperation with industry actors?** Industry actors do not seem to be specifically mentioned among those stakeholders that should be consulted in the elaboration of national CAP Strategic Plans.

*\* These summary responses can be attributed to authors only.*



# PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH THROUGH CAP STRATEGIC PLANS

Celia Nyssens



**EEB**

European  
Environmental  
Bureau

# AIR POLLUTION FROM AGRICULTURE

## What is the issue?



Ammonia

PM 2.5

Air pollution  
in rural &  
urban areas

Ground-  
level ozone

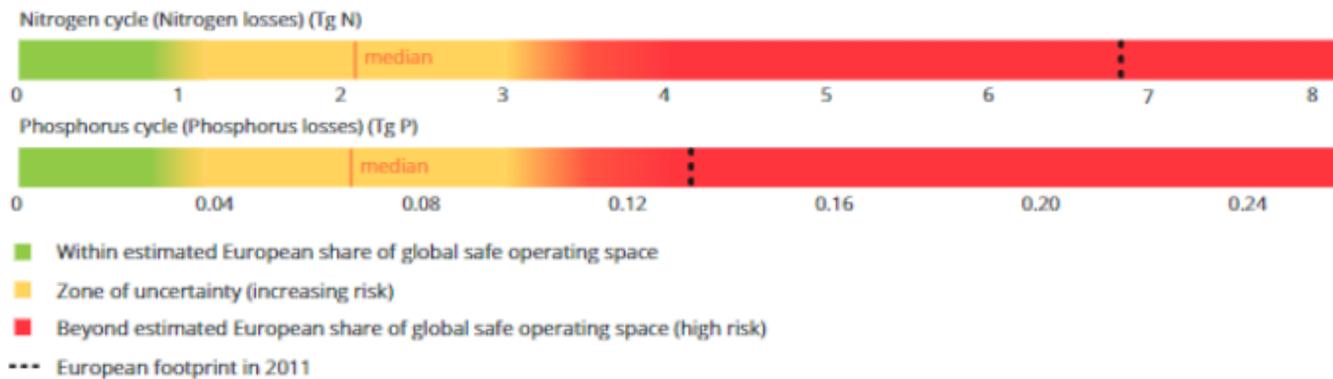
Methane

94%

54%

# AIR POLLUTION FROM AGRICULTURE

## And the solutions... Technology?



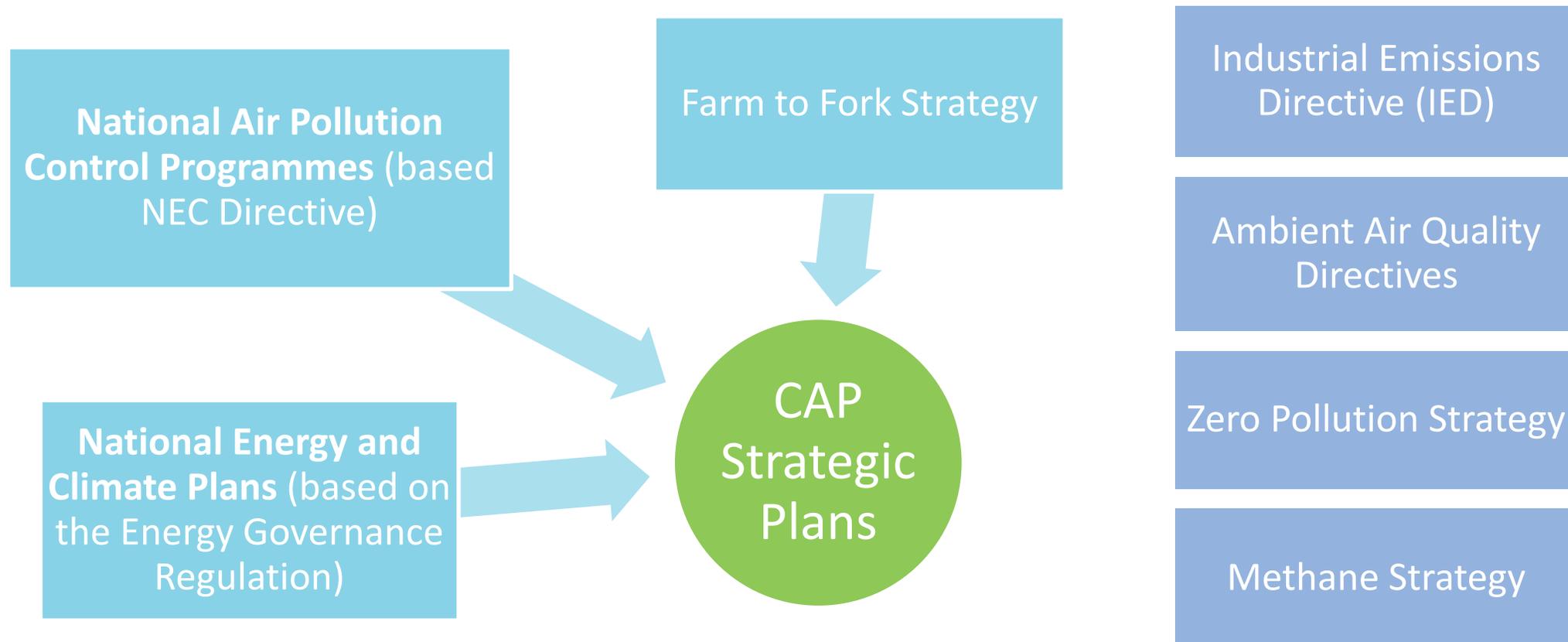
# AIR POLLUTION FROM AGRICULTURE

The real, long-term solution: system change

- Sustainable livestock farming
  - Maximum stocking density / maximum nutrients load
  - No CAP money for feed monocultures or intensive livestock farms
  - Support for the transition to, and maintenance of, extensive livestock farming (incl. agroforestry, pastoralism,...)
- Transition to agro-ecology
  - Long crop rotations including legumes and cover crops for ecologic management of soil fertility and pests
  - Mixed farming (crops and animals) and composting/biodigestion of agricultural waste for closed-loop nutrients management
  - Restoration of “agroecological infrastructure” (hedges, flower strips, ponds, etc.) for healthy and productive eco-systems (+ trees/hedges can serve as pollution screens)

# EU POLICY LANDSCAPE FOR AIR QUALITY

## Linking CAP Strategic Plans & Environmental Policy



# ACTION FOR CLEAN AIR IN CAP STRATEGIC PLANS

## Navigating the CAP maze

### Conditionality

- Strict standards for crop rotation, protection of grasslands, buffer strips, etc. can help, but levers are very limited.

### Subsidy schemes

- Support for extensive livestock farming / reduction of livestock density in intensive farms
- Support for the ammonia reduction measures listed in Annex I of NEC Directive

### Others

- Advisory services to help farmers adopt agroecological practices
- Support for non-productive investments (e.g. new hedges)

# MORE INFO:

The screenshot shows the top section of the 'clean air farming' website. At the top left is the logo, which consists of a stylized cow head profile made of dots, followed by the text 'clean air farming' and 'Reducing Ammonia and Methane Emissions from Agriculture'. Below the logo are three language selection buttons: 'DE', 'FR', and 'EN'. A horizontal navigation bar contains the following menu items: 'START', 'ABOUT', 'BACKGROUND', 'ACTIVITIES', 'DOWNLOADS AND LINKS', and 'PRESS'. Below the navigation bar, the text 'Clean Air Farming > Start' is visible. The main visual is a large photograph of two black and white cows in a green field, with a large industrial silo in the background. A small copyright notice '© creativenature-nl / Fotolia' is at the bottom right of the image.

**clean air farming**  
Reducing Ammonia and Methane Emissions from Agriculture

DE FR EN

START ABOUT BACKGROUND ACTIVITIES DOWNLOADS AND LINKS PRESS

Clean Air Farming > Start

Clean air from agriculture

This block contains a snippet from an article. On the left is a small image of a tractor with a large cylindrical tank, emitting a cloud of white dust or mist. To the right of the image is the article title and author information.

**THE BIG STINK: EUROPE'S LOCKDOWN UNCOVERS A SURPRISING SOURCE OF AIR POLLUTION**  
ROBERTA ARBINOLO x APRIL 2, 2020

The drop in traffic fumes in our cities' air is making us more sensitive to a source of air pollution too often ignored: emissions from agriculture. But this C...

This infographic features a background image of a red tractor with a large silver cylindrical tank in a green field. The 'clean air farming' logo is at the top left. A circular icon with a tractor silhouette and three dots is positioned on the right side. The main title and subtitle are centered in the lower half of the image.

**clean air farming**  
Reducing Ammonia and Methane Emissions from Agriculture

Ammonia and Methane Emissions from Agriculture

Their impacts and what we can do about it

A Project by: Deutsche Umwelthilfe, FRANCE NATURE ENVIRONNEMENT, EEB European Environmental Bureau, Bodensee-Stiftung

# THANK YOU

Celia Nyssens  
celia.nyssens@eeb.org



**EEB**  
European  
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Bureau





# New opportunities for health in European food & agricultural policies

Q&A

# Questions & comments – Air pollution

- What would be an "ideal" target for the reduction of **synthetic fertilizers** by 2030?
- It is very important to **reduce animal stocking density**, but if production of meat is reduced without lowering consumption, we will be importing the meat thereby relocating the problem. How do these objectives influence trade agreements? For instance, should environmental and animal-welfare standards be integrated into trade agreements?
- Producers must be part of the solution. The baseline for **conditionality** is getting stricter all the time and producers should be compensated in financial terms and for adopting new technologies.
- Will there be concrete goals to reduce the production and consumption of **animal-based products** (for example reduction of 50% by 2050)?



# Responses\* – Air pollution

- **Fertiliser use reduction:** The ultimate goal should be a complete phase out of synthetic fertilisers because we have too much nitrogen and phosphorus in our environment already. Instead, we need to better recycle nutrients from food waste and agriculture (incl. livestock manure) and adopt agronomic practices that foster soil health and fertility.
- **Trade as part of the animal farming nexus:** NGOs have made strong calls in framework of the F2F Strategy for reduced meat production and consumption (less but better!). Trade policy is a key issue, which the CAP can't really solve. We ask for stronger commitments in trade agreements on climate, human rights, and deforestation. All pieces of the puzzle need to work together, EU trade needs to support rather than undermine EU climate and health objectives.
- **Conditionality and support for farmers:** Adding elements to conditionality without a strategy to change the whole system is not the way forward. Many farmers will not have problems with conditionality, which are quite basic requirements, but it is harder for those who farm in intensive systems, and the support to change out of such models is not there. We should introduce incentives, both financial and in terms of advice, for a gradual but clear transition to agro-ecological farming.

*\* These summary responses can be attributed to authors only.*





# How to shape national CAP strategic plans to pursue nutrition objectives?

Nikolai Pushkarev, EPHA, 11 May 2020

# Which objectives?



more healthy,  
sustainable diets  
(general average)

- + **Vegetables and fruit**
- + **Whole grains**
- + **Legumes**
- + **Nuts & seeds**
- **Less *and better* meat, dairy, eggs**
- **Less processed foods high in fat, sugar, salt** (and likely: less 'ultra-processed' food overall)

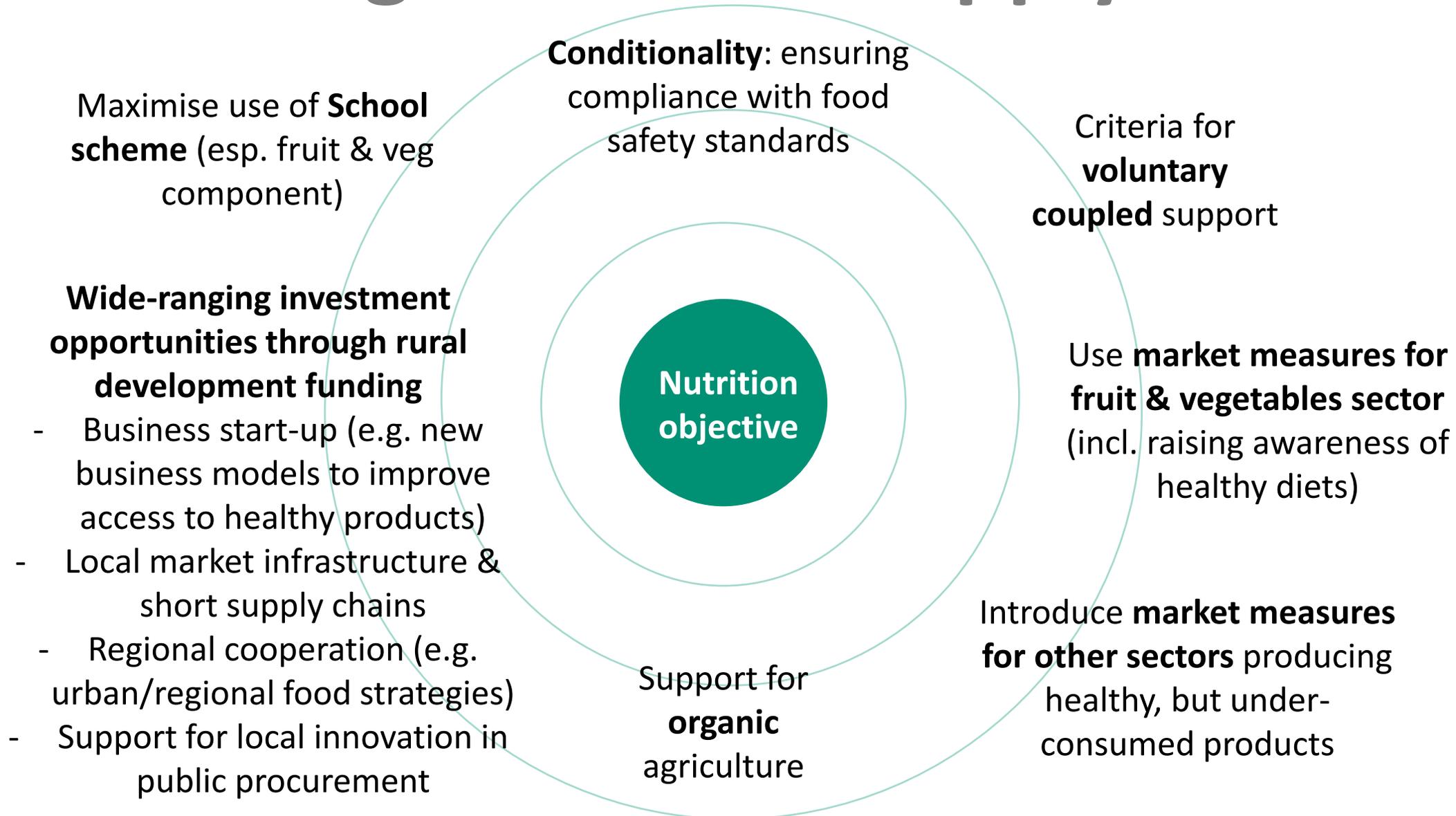


# CAP: space for nutrition?

- **Commitment** to make “*nutritious valuable products such as fruit and vegetables easily available for EU citizens*”. ([COM The Future of Food and Farming, 2017](#))
- New CAP specific **objective**: “*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.*” ([Proposal for CAP Strategic Plans Regulation](#))
- A patchwork of possible instruments, but **no indicator on nutrition**, so lacking incentive to use instruments strategically?



# Creating nutritious supply chains



# Strategic use of Strategic plans

- Different support measures are available, but a nutrition-related objective will help make **strategic use of CAP Strategic Plans**.
  - *National*: countries can set **voluntary targets** or **align CAP implementation with healthy food policies**.
  - *EU*: CAP reform is not over – **improvements are still possible**.
- **An integrated approach to food and agriculture** is not wishful thinking, but a necessity that is increasingly recognised. But more voices are needed!





# New opportunities for health in European food & agricultural policies

Q&A

**Webinar**

**New Opportunities for health in  
European Food and Agricultural Policies**

**11<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

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**European Public Health Association (EUPHA)  
messages for CAP (and CFP?) negotiators**

**Christopher A Birt**

**[christopher.birt75@gmail.com](mailto:christopher.birt75@gmail.com)**

# Recommendations (1)

- **Meat and dairy production and consumption should be discouraged and reduced;**
- **Poultry and egg production and consumption should be reduced somewhat;**
- **Protein production and consumption should be mainly from a plant-based origin;**
- **Bread and other grain-based products should increasingly use non-standard grains;**
- **Increased fruit and vegetable production and consumption should be encouraged and supported vigorously;**
- **There should be increased availability and consumption of sustainably sourced fish, seafood, and seaweeds, etc.**

# Recommendations (2)

- **Production and consumption of dairy products should be limited, replaced by soya milk, etc., but not by milk substitutes requiring large amounts of water;**
- **Food industry should be discouraged from making foods requiring excess energy or water in their production;**
- **Food industry should be discouraged from making added-value energy-rich ready meals;**
- **Food industry should be encouraged to make increased varieties of vegetarian and vegan foods;**
- **Mandatory systems for management of food waste should be implemented;**
- **New food packaging materials should be adopted, but used only sparingly and when essential, to replace plastic.**



# Concluding remarks and recommendations by organisers

Drawing on common themes from  
the questions and comments made  
during the webinar.

# 1. Make most of the CAP's new objective on “food and health”.

- The inclusion of a new objective on “food and health” under the CAP, which refers to safe, nutritious and sustainable food, is a major opportunity for human and planetary health ([Article 6\(i\) CAP proposal](#)).
- However, the [guidance](#) prepared by the European Commission on this objective only covers the dimension of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). While this is an important health dimension, a focus on reducing antibiotics use only does no justice to the full scope of the objective.
- While “nutritious and sustainable food” are part of the objective, there is no clear commitment to make the CAP contribute to a shift towards more sustainable diets. Such diets are healthier, more plant-rich with ‘less and better’ animal products (i.e. meat, dairy and eggs). For instance, the CAP proposal does not include a consumption-related indicator.



# Make most of the CAP's new objective on "food and health" (cont.)

## Recommendations:

1. The European Commission, in its guidelines on the 'food and health' objective, should include guidance on how the various existing CAP instruments can be strategically used to support a shift towards more healthy, sustainable diets.
2. A nutrition-related indicator should be added to the CAP Regulation to make sure countries reflect the links between consumption and production into their national CAP Strategic Plans.
3. During the preparation of national CAP Strategic Plans countries should include a (voluntary) nutrition-related objective and/or target to guide their intervention strategy, even if not mandated by the CAP Regulation.
4. Health stakeholders should engage both at national and European levels to make the case for and propose ways to align the CAP with sustainable dietary objectives.



## 2. Integrate Health (Equity) Impact Assessment into food and agricultural policies.

- Assessing the societal impacts of policy proposals is an integral component of the European Commission's 'Better Regulation' approach. Some guidance on assessing health impacts is provided ([Tool #31](#)).
- The proposal for the new CAP was accompanied by an [impact assessment](#), including reference to health dimensions. It cannot, however, be seen as a systematic, evidence-led assessment of the main agriculture-related health impacts and the likely differential effects of different policy options.
- The CAP proposal does not use the term 'impact assessment' when addressing the design of national CAP Strategic Plans. Nonetheless, national plans should be based on an "assessment of needs" and a "SWOT analysis". Also, the proposed "intervention strategy" needs to demonstrate its internal policy consistency and countries should evaluate their plans in advance so as to enhance their effectiveness (see [Title V CAP Proposal](#)). These conditions imply the need to understand the impacts of different policy options on various societal dimensions.



# Integrat Health (Equity) Impact Assessment into food and agricultural policies (cont.)

- Few comprehensive Health Impact Assessments of agricultural policy have been conducted in Europe. The best-known example was performed in [Slovenia in 2003](#). A 2003 Swedish report covering several health-related aspects of the CAP (i.e. fruit and vegetables, dairy, wine tobacco) is another example of an in-depth analysis.

## Recommendations:

1. Public health researchers should put more priority and attention to exploring the links between public health and agricultural policy, especially the CAP. This will serve to enhance evidence, improve Health Impact Assessment methodologies and raise attention to this topic.
2. Despite the CAP being one of the EU's oldest policies, the Commission has never assessed the links between agricultural policy and health. The Commission should perform a comprehensive [sustainability evaluation](#) of the CAP in relation to key public health dimensions.



### 3. Ensure meaningful involvement in the design of national CAP Strategic Plans.

- The proposal to strengthen the involvement of relevant stakeholders, including health authorities and civil society, in the preparation of national CAP Strategic Plans by means of a legal obligation is an important innovation and opportunity ([Article 94 CAP proposal](#)).
- However, no hard assurances are available to ensure compliance with this obligation. While the Commission needs to approve each national CAP Strategic Plan, the approval explicitly excludes assessment of the national consultation process ([see Article 106\(5\) together with 95\(2\) CAP proposal](#)).
- Big differences exist between EU countries in how national CAP consultations are organised in terms of their [inclusiveness and transparency](#).



# Ensure meaningful involvement in the design of national CAP Strategic Plans (cont.)

- Preliminary results from a short [pan-European survey of public health actors](#) conducted by EPHA and EUPHA, find very low awareness of the national CAP Strategic Plan process (approx. 80% of respondents are not aware of the process) and very low awareness of the need to consult health stakeholders (over 80% are not aware that health actors should be consulted).

## Recommendations:

1. Health organisations and public authorities should raise the question of their involvement in the process of designing national CAP Strategic Plans. Potential deficiencies in the national consultation process should be highlighted both nationally and to the European Commission.
2. The CAP proposal should be adapted to ensure the Commission will assess the quality of stakeholder engagement while approving national CAP Strategic Plans. A deficient process should send the draft plan back to the drawing board.



## 4. Align different policies, such as the CAP, F2F Strategy and trade policy for an integrated transition towards sustainable food systems.

- There is an urgent need to transform current food systems towards sustainability. No single policy can achieve this. An overarching, integrated approach is needed that binds different policies together in a coherent way – a ‘common food policy’.
- Individual policies, such as the CAP, may continue to exist but will have to be considerably transformed to align with other policies under a shared roof of common objectives.
- An important lever to achieve such integration is to stress the co-benefits that can be achieved from systemic transitions. For instance, the transition to ‘less and better’ animal products can provide multiple benefits by allowing to cut air pollution, tackle inappropriate farm antibiotics use, mitigate the climate crisis, protect biodiversity, improve nutrition and prevent non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and improve the value added for producers.



# Align different policies, such as the CAP, F2F Strategy and trade policy for an integrated transition towards sustainable food systems (cont.)

- More attention is needed to introduce policies to change 'food environments' to make the healthier and more sustainable food options the most available, attractive and affordable. Such [policies](#) include pricing mechanisms (taxes and subsidies), regulations on marketing and advertising, nutrition labelling etc.
- Health is a central pillar of food system sustainability and provides many cross-cutting opportunities.

## Recommendations:

- Health organisations and researchers should enhance their engagement in promoting an integrated approach to food policy, show the added value of health and demonstrate that the application of public health principles can enhance cross-sectoral coordination.



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