



New opportunities for health in European food & agricultural policies

Background note

3 new opportunities for health in European food and agricultural policies

1. The **EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)** will for the first time ever include a specific **objective on health**.
2. Each EU country will have to prepare a national **CAP Strategic Plan** explaining how the CAP's objectives, including on health, will be achieved. **Health authorities** and civil society organisations should **be involved** in the preparation of this national CAP strategy.
3. The **Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system** will, in the course of the next years, introduce actions to improve the healthfulness and sustainability of food systems. It should, among others, guide the national implementation of the CAP.



1. A new CAP objective on health...

In its 2018 proposal to revise the CAP, the European Commission proposes nine new objectives for the policy. One of these is an **objective on health**:

“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.”

[Article 6 \(i\) CAP Strategic Plans Regulation](#)

This means that **for the first time, the CAP will have to pursue health as one of its specific objectives.**



... and other health-relevant objectives

At the same time, different other CAP objectives, such as on environment, climate and social cohesion, can also deliver important health co-benefits if ambitiously pursued.



2. The CAP Strategic Plan...

The revised CAP will have a new way of working. Governments will need to **design a national “CAP Strategic Plan”**: a comprehensive and consistent national CAP implementation strategy, based on an assessment of needs, a SWOT analysis and an intervention strategy.

This national “CAP Strategic Plan” should set **specific targets** and include a strategy to achieve these targets, including for the objective on food and health, but also other (environmental) health objectives.

[Article 95 and further CAP Strategic Plans Regulation](#)



...should involve health actors

Importantly, **national health authorities and civil society organisations will need to be involved in the preparation of CAP Strategic Plans.**

Governments need to “*organise a partnership*” with “*relevant public authorities*” and “*relevant bodies representing civil society*”.

[Article 94 CAP Strategic Plans Regulation](#)



3. The Farm to Fork Strategy...

The EU Farm to **Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system**, published on May 2020, aims at a comprehensive approach towards food systems.

It recognises the “inextricable links between healthy people, healthy societies and a healthy planet” and aims to “boost the economy, improve people's health and quality of life, care for nature, and leave no one behind.”

[Farm to Fork Strategy](#)



3. ...will introduce a range of actions...

The strategy will **introduce a number of actions** in the course of the next years to enhance the sustainability of food systems, with health as a main pillar.

Among others, it sets targets on **antibiotics** sales and **pesticides** use reduction and introduces a number of actions to improve nutrition, such as setting **nutrient profiles** under the Claims Regulation, proposing a mandatory EU **front-of-pack nutrition label**, enhancing **reformulation** efforts and introducing mandatory sustainability requirements for **public food procurement**.

[Farm to Fork Strategy](#)



...and set the tone for the CAP?

Among its functions, the Farm to Fork Strategy is meant to **shape the preparation and implementation of national CAP Strategic Plans**.

The Strategy should help ensure that *“from the outset the national strategic plans for agriculture fully reflect the ambition of the Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy”*.

[European Commission, European Green Deal](#)

As part of the Farm to Fork actions, the Commission will make **recommendations to national governments** on how this can be achieved.



For any questions, please refer to nikolai@epha.org



Co-funded by
the Health Programme
of the European Union

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