



## **DECLARATION**

### **« European young farmers' priorities for the CAP after 2013 »**

Following the CEJA Seminar in France, Annecy-Talloires, from 20-23 September 2008  
« Which Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) after 2013  
for ensuring the renewal of generations in agriculture ? »

the European Council of Young Farmers agreed to adopt the following declaration:

### **Introduction**

With regards to the fundamentally changing situation of the agricultural sector that will lead to many new challenges over the next few years, European young farmers wished to contribute to the debate on the future of agriculture during their meeting in Annecy. This declaration is made as a proposal to European institutions in order to define tomorrow's agricultural policy.

Since the great successes of European construction have been based on a strong political will, the **European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA) underlines the importance to start defining the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) after 2013 as an ambitious project that is supported by the entire European society:**

- Offering clear and understandable perspectives to young farmers of today and tomorrow in order to facilitate investments and providing them with real opportunities to develop their agri-enterprises
- Reinforcing the CAP's legitimacy in the eyes of European citizens

According to CEJA, setting up in agriculture means not only taking a personal and professional choice as an entrepreneur but also facing new challenges in context with the growing demands of European society. European agriculture needs to respond to these expectations from European citizens and serve society's demands for food safety and security, environmental protection and intelligent land use as well as the right for information and transparency when buying food.

The renewal of generations is crucial if European agriculture wants to fulfill all these missions. CEJA therefore shares the opinion of the European Parliament<sup>1</sup>: the CAP should make the renewal of generations in agriculture its priority for the future.

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<sup>1</sup> European Parliament resolution of 12 March 2008 on the CAP 'Health Check' (2007/2195(INI)) and European Parliament resolution of 5 June on the future for young farmers under the ongoing reform of the CAP (2007/2194(INI))

## Challenges for European agriculture

There are many challenges that European agriculture will have to face in the coming years:

- The world's population will reach 9 billion inhabitants by 2050 and global agricultural production will have to double at the same time in order to satisfy the growing need for food ;
- The demand for non-food agriculture goods (energy, biomaterials etc.) is rising and underlining the need for a new integrated strategy for renewable energies. In this context, non-food agriculture goods become a strategic contribution due to increasing fuel prices and global warming;
- European citizens ask for more and more food security and safety, for traceability of food, for transparency in labeling and European quality standards;
- Management of European landscape and an economical network of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are closely linked to the spreading agricultural activity all over our European rural territory;
- European society asks for a sustainable agriculture that demands changes in farmers' production methods, will complicate production conditions and change the economical situation for farmers;
- The constantly changing situation of commodities prices in the last months, will lead to price volatility, especially with the opening of markets worldwide.

To help farmers meeting these challenges, CEJA requests that the objectives of tomorrow's CAP will be defined now, together with the corresponding instruments. In our view, it is important to set our goals first, before discussing the necessary financial support that is needed to achieve them. For a strong agriculture sector of the future, CEJA considers it important to have an adequate financial package for young farmers.

## New objectives for the CAP after 2013

Taking this new context into consideration, European young farmers believe that a future agricultural policy should meet five objectives:

### 1. ALLOWING THE RENEWAL OF FARMERS' GENERATIONS

Because only well-trained and qualified farm managers will be able to face the challenges of the European agriculture of tomorrow, CEJA considers ensuring the renewal of generations in agriculture as a main priority. **The agricultural policy of tomorrow should allow setting up young farmers in a viable and livable way on the entire EU territory, supporting them in the setting up and in implementing their business plan.**

## 2. ENSURING FOOD AVAILABILITY, SAFETY, DIVERSITY AND QUALITY FOR ALL EUROPEAN CITIZENS

CEJA considers agriculture as a strategic sector for Europe. **Agricultural policy should allow guaranteeing food security for 500 million European consumers.** The EU should therefore rely on a strong agricultural sector that is able to fulfill the need for food in quantity as well as quality, while respecting food safety standards and encouraging the diversity of productions.

## 3. MAINTAINING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN EUROPE TO PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT

European citizens are more and more concerned with the impact of their activities on the environment and ask for a strict respect of environmental standards in all economical sectors. For CEJA, agriculture is an asset in the fight against global warming (energy savings, bio-energy production, CO2 capture) and plays an important role in maintaining biodiversity through various and complementary production systems. **Agricultural policy should therefore help farmers to play a real part in environmental protection. Promotion of innovative farming practices and a stronger link between research institutes and the agricultural sector will facilitate the work of young farmers and improve their practices.**

## 4. CONTRIBUTING TO THE ECONOMICAL AND SOCIAL VITALITY OF TERRITORIES

European young farmers are convinced that the agricultural sector plays a major part in territorial cohesion. Agriculture is indeed linked to a large variety of jobs in the production chain; it takes an important role in the structure of territories and ensures life in rural areas that would otherwise be threatened by desertification. **For CEJA, a future agricultural policy should allow maintaining agriculture on the entire European territory by guaranteeing the presence of numerous young agri-entrepreneurs and hereby giving a strong future perspective to rural areas.**

## 5. PROMOTING THE EUROPEAN FARMING MODEL BOTH AT EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

As Europe offers its citizens a high level of food safety along with quality and diversity in food products, competitors from other countries have to be forced to respect the same level of health, social, environmental and animal welfare standards as European producers. If this is not respected, European consumers need to be clearly informed to be able to make a free and conscious choice of products. **Agricultural policy should strengthen its agricultural model that considers the value of European identity and society as its basis and fight for its recognition at international level.**

Preparing the future means developing appropriate instruments for a new CAP.

## **Our proposals: renewed instruments for the CAP after 2013**

European young farmers propose to set up appropriate tools in line with the objectives of a future CAP under four axes:

### **1<sup>ST</sup> AXIS: MARKET ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT TO MAINTAIN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE ON THE ENTIRE EUROPEAN TERRITORY**

In order to ensure a regular food supply for European citizens in the common interest of both consumers and producers, to encourage local and regional agriculture with numerous farmers and diversified production, CEJA proposes:

- **to develop a genuine strategy of cooperation between farmers and other stakeholders of the supply chain.** The aim is to achieve added value that is shared fairly among stakeholders and to better organize markets.
- **to create innovative tools for market management within the 1<sup>st</sup> pillar of the CAP** which
  - o provide EU producers with « safety nets » and
  - o allow to manage risks and crisis in agriculture
- **to create an observatory for monitoring markets**
- **to establish communication and promotion actions for food products in Europe and around the world**

### **2<sup>ND</sup> AXIS: A NEW FRAMEWORK BASED ON RECOGNITION OF THE “EUROPEAN STANDARD”**

In the future, agricultural policy needs to compensate for the very high demands that European farmers have to fulfill and work on their recognition on international level. For CEJA, this implies:

- **Imposing the same rules and standards on all agricultural products that enter the European market.**
- **making it mandatory to indicate through labels the origin of all agricultural products, as well as the origin of all ingredients of transformed products, creating a more transparent market for the consumer and the producer.**
- **reinforcing controls of imported products that are sold on the common market to guarantee their conformity with European rules and to respect the principle of reciprocity in international commerce.**

### **3<sup>RD</sup> AXIS: CONCERTED POLICIES TO RECOGNIZE THE DIFFERENT MISSIONS OF AGRICULTURE**

In order to maintain the diversity of European agriculture and the presence of numerous farmers on the entire territory, European young farmers wish for the implementation of support measures to help farming in less-favoured areas and to value all benefits of agricultural activity for society. For CEJA, this includes:

- **maintaining agri-entreprises in less-favoured areas through compensation of disadvantages and assuring their competitiveness**

- **promoting local products and their link to the territory they were produced on, such as PDOs, PGIs etc...**
- **ensuring complementary supports from various EU policies** (CAP, EU Regional Policy of economic and social cohesion, EU Enterprise and Industry, EU Research Policy etc..) **in order to remunerate all services provided by agricultural activity to society** (land use, landscape maintaining, biodiversity preservation, fight against global warming, economical gains for rural territories etc...)

#### **4<sup>TH</sup> AXIS: A STRONG POLICY FOR SETTING UP YOUNG FARMERS ALL OVER EUROPE**

Attracting many young people into farming and maintaining young farmers on the entire European territory requires the implementation of a strong European policy for the setting up of young farmers.

CEJA welcomes the recent proposals by the European Parliament<sup>2</sup> that correspond to the ideas that young farmers have been defending for a long time: the need for a strong mandatory policy for the setting up of young farmers in all member states of the European Union. **CEJA asks for an integration of the renewal of generations as a specific thematic axis in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar of the CAP. In particular, CEJA asks for an obligatory installation support as well as the integrated access to other measures (“Package for young farmers”).**

CEJA also requires:

- **improving setting-up support schemes** by a higher ceiling of the EU setting-up premium, **facilitating access to credit for young farmers** by reinforcing investment support and interest subsidies, as well as the **system of bank guarantees and insurances**, and **granting tax reductions during the setting-up period**
- **implementing a genuine policy to promote farming**, one of the main missions of CEJA, and providing **increased support for lifelong training for farmers for the promotion of innovation and the transfer of knowledge.**
- **setting up exchange programs between young farmers** that make it possible to take mutual advantage of their different backgrounds and agricultural best practices.
- **Improving access to applied research and the transfer of results**, with direct participation of young farmers in research projects and the implementation of results in their farms.

## **Conclusion**

**By the present declaration, European Young Farmers from CEJA claim that installation of a new generation in agriculture has to be a priority of the future CAP. A preference needs be given to young farmers in the implementation of tomorrow’s agriculture policy because the European farming sector can in fact only stay sustainable and competitive if more attention will be paid to the renewal of generations with young, innovative and pro-active farmers.**

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<sup>2</sup> European Parliament resolution of 5 June on the future for young farmers under the ongoing reform of the CAP (2007/2194(INI))