

EU Farm to Fork Strategy

REACTION

MAY 2020



The European Commission's Farm to Fork Strategy sets out measures to deliver more sustainable food systems and help achieve the EU's Green Deal objectives towards climate-neutrality in Europe.

We support the Commission's ambition for the EU food supply chain to become the gold standard for environmental, social and economic sustainability. As the largest manufacturing industry in Europe, the food and drink industry will have an important role in advancing a Farm to Fork Strategy that we hope will enable the industry to grow sustainably.

Food and drink manufacturers are uniquely placed at the centre of the food supply chain. We purchase 70% of all EU agricultural raw materials, to produce safe, affordable and high-quality food and drink products for sale by retailers, hospitality and other food outlets and, ultimately, for the enjoyment of consumers.

Sustainable from farm to fork

We believe the Farm to Fork Strategy presents a unique opportunity to develop a holistic EU food policy that works with the entire food chain to achieve more sustainable food systems.

FoodDrinkEurope members are already investing widely in sustainability across their operations, while also providing safe, affordable, convenient and enjoyable food to a growing population.

Support for SMEs and sectors hit particularly hard by Covid-19, a stronger Single Market for food and drinks, and a predictable policy environment to encourage research, innovation and investment in infrastructure for sustainability will be critical enablers for our sector to scale up, accelerate and deliver more sustainable solutions.

INDUSTRY STEPS TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS:

Greener planet

- Support the EU's 2050 carbon neutral target with more energy efficient operations, renewables and supply chain collaboration.
- Improve product environmental footprint to preserve natural resources, while helping halve food waste by 2030.
- Optimise packaging, encourage re-use and innovate to find sustainable packaging alternatives.
- Ensure supply chain due diligence to protect biodiversity and forests.

Thriving economy

- Protect the Single Market to ensure diversity, affordability, and safety of products for consumers.
- Work with the entire food chain to promote fair trading practices for all.
- Support sustainable development through Free Trade Agreements and address opportunities and challenges in international markets.
- Step-up investments, including research and innovation, within a predictable policy environment.

Healthier living

- Maintain safe and high-quality food and drink through science-based policy.
- Innovate to further optimise the nutritional content of food and drink products and develop new products to meet consumer demands.
- Give consumers clear information for a healthy, balanced diet with access to a wide diversity of food and drink products.
- Support the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, including workers' health and wellbeing.

For more detail, download our sustainable food systems paper here



The EU food and drink industry buys **70% of all EU agricultural raw materials**

The sector represents 294,000 companies, 99% of which are SMEs, **employing 4.72 million people**

We are committed to support the European Commission's objective to achieving **climate neutrality** in the EU by 2050

OUR POLICY ASKS

To ensure the Farm to Fork Strategy can deliver more resilient and sustainable food systems, policy makers should:

1 Ensure alignment

Objectives, targets and timelines must be aligned between all Green Deal initiatives to ensure a predictable regulatory environment that encourages innovation needed for sustainable food systems.

2 Include impact assessments

Policy must be science-based and impact assessments should be carried out to ensure that food security, safety and sustainability are not compromised. We are concerned about measures in the Strategy that have been included without prior consultation or scientific assessment, such as the proposal to establish maximum levels for certain nutrients in foods and targets on farm inputs. A structured dialogue is needed with stakeholders to identify and address cross-cutting challenges and trade-offs.

3 Support Covid-19 recovery

The economic sustainability of the entire food supply chain must be supported to recover from the shock caused by Covid-19, particularly the sustainability of SMEs that make up ninety-nine percent of the food and drink sector. An EU trade policy that integrates sustainability and a well-functioning international agri-food supply chain should play an integral part in the economic recovery.

4 Back the Single Market

Single Market principles should be embedded throughout the Strategy, yet the possible extension of mandatory origin indication to certain products does not appear

to respect these principles. Member States must be discouraged from undermining the Single Market through protectionism or "gastro-nationalism" which negatively impact European and global trading.

5 Harmonise front-of-pack labelling

A clear political roadmap is needed to align all stakeholders towards a single, harmonised, and voluntary front of pack nutrition labelling scheme that will help empower consumers to choose a varied and balanced diet.

6 Deliver food security

To continue the good collaboration during Covid-19, all stakeholders in the food supply chain must be involved in developing EU contingency plans to ensure food security in future times of crisis.

7 Keep fairness central

The Strategy should ensure fairness for all, including a review on buying power across the food supply chain and a redefinition of consumer welfare to reflect sustainability goals, rather than the lowest possible price.

ABOUT FOODDRINKEUROPE

FoodDrinkEurope represents Europe's food and drink industry, Europe's largest manufacturing sector in terms of turnover, employment and value added.

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To read our farm to fork consultation input in detail, [click here](#)