

Call for Fair and sustainable agricultures in Europe and in the wider World

**A common position,
initiated and developed by the following organisations :**

Farmers Organisations

Jeunes Agriculteurs / Confédération Paysanne / Chrétiens dans le Monde Rural (CMR) / Fédération Nationale d'Agriculture Biologique (FNAB) / Mouvement Rural de Jeunesse Chrétienne (MRJC)

International Solidarity Organisations

Coordination Sud / Centre de Recherche et d'Information pour le Développement (GRID) / Comité Français pour la Solidarité Internationale (CFSI) / Comité Catholique contre la Faim et pour le Développement (CCFD) / Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques (GRET) / Afrique Verte / Agir ici pour un monde solidaire / Centre International de Coopération pour le Développement Agricole (CICDA) / Fédération Artisans du Monde / Solidarité

Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development Organisations

4D - Dossiers et Débats pour le Développement Durable / Les Amis de la Terre / Réseau Action Climat France / Réseau Cohérence

Consumers Organisations

Action Consommation / Alliance Paysans Ecologistes Consommateurs

The following organisations are also supporters :

A l'écoute de la nature, Accueil Paysan, Adéquation, Association de Formation et d'Information pour le développement des Initiatives Rurales (AFIP), Association pour un contrat mondial de l'eau, ATTAC, CIEPAL, Collectif de l'éthique dans le sucre, Collectif Saône Doubs Vivant, Coordination des Associations de Solidarité Internationale de Bretagne (CASI), Femmes et Changements, Fondation France Libertés, Initiatives de Développement Stratégique, Institut de Recherche et d'Application des Méthodes de Développement (IRAM), Max Havelaar France, Rapsode, Vétérinaires Sans Frontières.

We call for an immediate change in the direction of agricultural policies in Europe and in the wider world so that they encourage and guarantee:

- The right to food sovereignty and respect for small farmers' agriculture
- Remunerative prices and employment for farmers
- Healthy food, accessible to all
- Preservation of the environment, of resources and of natural habitats

The World Trade Organisation's Ministerial Conference (Cancun, September 2003) did not allow serious consideration to be paid to the global agricultural crisis, which calls for a radical change in national and regional agriculture policies and in international trade rules.

The 850 million persons suffering from hunger in the world, 600 million among who are farmers, leads us to refuse a trading system that causes constantly declining and volatile international farm prices and that tolerates unfair and costly dumping practices (selling agricultural products on external markets at prices below the production costs).

Everywhere in the world, competition for the lowest production costs and lack of sound rules in a market largely dominated by a handful of agri transnational corporations, has led to the disappearance of small farmers, and has cast doubts on the quality of food products while damaging environmental resources (soil, water, biodiversity, climate and energy).

The CAP, an element in European integration that has made it possible to improve food self-sufficiency in the 15 member states, is at a turning point in its history.

The June 2003 reform, whose goal was to adapt to the free-trade logic promoted by the WTO, is already outdated due to the failure of negotiations in Cancun. Moreover, the reform ignores the additional 4,5 million farmers from the ten Eastern and Central Europe countries who will be added to the current 6,5 million farmers of EU-15, in the framework of the EU enlargement.

We assert that a fair and sustainable Common Agricultural Policy is necessary.

It should aim at preserving employment and satisfying consumers and citizens' claims concerning food quality, in a way that is coherent with the Community objectives in terms of co-operation and international solidarity, regional development, environmental protection, and fight against the greenhouse effect.

This agricultural policy needs to be centred on the European market.

We, the signatory organisations, representing numerous actors of civil society affected by the economic, social, environmental and health dumping deriving from current agricultural policies, call for:

- **Remunerative agricultural prices and social policies for the preservation and creation of jobs and economic activities**

Price decreases, leading to a decrease in farm income, are a cause of food insecurity and rural exodus in the South. In the North it pushes countries to spend ever more to back up the incomes of

producers, with no benefits for consumers or family farming. Europe loses 200,000 active farmers each year and 40 per cent of French farmers have an income below the minimum wage. In Europe, the domestic price of wheat is half that of ten years ago. European chicken is sold at 1.37 Euros per kilo in the West Africa markets while the local production cost is around 2.28 Euros per kilo. African farmers, faced with unfair competition, are unable to sell their goods on their own markets.

In the North as in the South, public policies and a fairer distribution of income must guarantee access by all to healthy and sufficient food. Agricultural income should be based on remunerative prices that are in particular guaranteed by domestic market protection and by mechanisms to regulate and distribute the volumes produced. Only farms that are small or located in less-productive zones will have the right to direct subsidies to complement their incomes. The effect on consumers will be very limited given the tiny proportion of the final food price that is made up by producer costs - the profit margins of intermediaries making up most of the price of the products.

- **Policies to preserve environmental resources and to produce healthy food for all**

The efforts made by small farmers to develop a sustainable agriculture respectful of the environment have neither been sufficiently recognised nor encouraged by the current CAP. By encouraging intensive production models, agricultural policies have in many cases led to polluting practices and to the production of poor quality food.

Environmental regulations must be enacted and respected by all, with effective means of control and enforce. In addition, voluntary steps in the direction of a sustainable agriculture that give real guarantees to consumers, must be supported.

The reform adopted in June 2003 by the European Union does not live up to these goals. Instead of initiating a sustainable agricultural policy, it accelerates the current process of dismantling of the CAP.

We call for a change in the direction of the Common Agricultural Policy by setting up the following measures, jointly:

- Determine a price corresponding to at least the average production cost in the EU, comprising the remuneration of the farmer's job
- Regulate quantities produced in order to bring them into line with domestic demand;
- End direct or indirect subsidies to exports;
- Protect the European market against imports, and negotiate special agreements with developing countries as an approach of international solidarity and based on remunerative prices for all parties concerned;
- Set up a sustainable rural development policy allowing a fair sharing out of production with the goal of maintaining agricultural and rural activities in all of regions;
- Set up policies to preserve the environment and to produce healthy food available to all.

A change in the aims and direction of the CAP would make it possible for the EU to shift its international alliances and to defend a renegotiation of the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture, so that its goal be that of raising and stabilising world agricultural prices, as well as promoting agricultural practices that respect environmental resources and health.

A new agreement should be based on the following elements:

- Regulation of international markets, including respect for the principle of food sovereignty and the prohibition of economic, social and environmental dumping ;
- New terms of international exchange of products and mechanisms to stabilise agriculture prices;
- Strengthening of regional zones of agricultural and food sovereignty and promotion of exchanges within these spaces.

Maintaining of a strong agricultural policy and of a food sovereignty space is justified if the EU commits itself to a reform towards sustainable agriculture and if it regulates agricultural output in order to avoid the export of surpluses prejudicial to farmers in other countries. Moreover, a CAP founded on the objective of remunerative prices would allow the EU to allocate, within the same budget, a larger part of the financial resources to a balanced rural development in an enlarged Europe.

The EU will then legitimately be able to claim the right, for itself and for others, to introduce measures, particularly financial ones, to protect its farmers, its environment and the health of its consumers.

We, signatory organisations, are prepared through our actions in alerting the public and through our contacts with partners in Europe and around the world, to support the efforts by France and the EU to promote the emergence of a sustainable agriculture, one which would allow the three billion farmers throughout the world to earn a living with dignity.