

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0669/03
by Giacomo Santini (PPE-DE)
to the Council

Subject: Young farmers ignored under the new CAP

One voice has been missing from the passionate debate surrounding the reform of the common agricultural policy – that of young farmers. Nor was there any tangible reference in the Commission document to what will become of these farmers, their problems and their expectations.

We have therefore not moved on from articles 7 and 8 of Regulation (EC) No 1257/99¹, which envisage higher percentages for the EAGGF premium, so that instead of the ceiling of 40% of the volume of investments for ordinary holdings, the figure rises to 45% for young farmers and 55% for young farmers in disadvantaged areas.

Article 8 envisages a maximum amount of EUR 25 000 of setting-up aid for young farmers. This is not much as an incentive for a young person to set up a farm, faced with the forthcoming major reforms.

Can the Council therefore say:

1. why the draft CAP reform does not set aside a specific chapter devoted to young farmers;
2. whether it is possible to incorporate in the draft reform an amendment to update Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 1257/99, proposing at least a 100% increase in the setting-up aid, raising it to EUR 50 000;
3. whether it is possible to incorporate in the draft reform an amendment to increase aid as a percentage of the volume of investment from 45% and 55% to 65% and 75% respectively for young farmers in lowland and mountain areas;
4. whether it is possible to incorporate in the draft reform an amendment to suspend the system of State aids as regards direct aid to young farmers from the Member States and regional authorities?

¹ OJ L 160, 26.6.1999, p. 80.