

**Question for written answer E-003636/2022  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Daniel Buda** (PPE)

Subject: Cattle herd size in Europe is shrinking

An increasing number of farmers in Europe are giving up cattle breeding because of rising costs. Over a period of only two months, excessive costs caused a reduction in Greece's national cattle herd size of 4.5%. Cretan cattle breeders are reducing the size of their herds, as they are unable to meet the costs of rearing and feeding their animals.

According to the Greek Cattle Farmers' Association, between March and April alone, 450 000 head of cattle were slaughtered, equivalent to a reduction of 4.5% in the national herd size. The President of the Agricultural Cooperative of Kofina had warned that, by October, half of Crete's population of bovine livestock would be gone.

The price of a bag of animal feed has risen from EUR 12 previously to EUR 23 currently and is set to rise to more than EUR 28 in October. High feed costs also lead to livestock malnutrition. Beef cattle yield is also decreasing at just over 38% compared with 43% previously. This leads to milk price increases. Milk prices may increase by 10-15%.

How can the Commission support farmers faced with increasing cattle breeding costs?

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