



## THE FARM TO FORK STRATEGY

The Farm to Fork (F2F) Strategy is part of the European Union's Green Deal, which aims to make the EU climate-neutral by 2050. The F2F Strategy is a policy framework setting out policy goals and initiatives designed to make the European Union's food system more sustainable and environmentally friendly. The strategy comprises both regulatory and non-regulatory initiatives, with the common agricultural and fisheries policies as key tools to support a just transition.

### LEGAL BASIS

The legal basis for the common agricultural policy is laid down in the [Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union](#) (Articles 38 to 44) (3.2.1)

The [Farm to Fork \(F2F\) Strategy](#) is a policy framework and strategy and was presented by the European Commission on 20 May 2020.

The F2F Strategy is part of the European Green Deal. The European Commission published the [communication on the European Green Deal](#) on 11 December 2019.

### INTRODUCTION

Despite the COVID-19 crisis, climate change mitigation is still urgently necessary, and there is still a need for sustainable growth.

On 11 December 2019, the European Commission published its communication on the European Green Deal, which launched the debate on how to make Europe the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050. The European Green Deal goes well beyond climate policy. It includes a new sustainable growth model for the EU, emphasising that decarbonisation, sustainability, protection of natural resources, public health and economic competitiveness must go hand-in-hand.

This new EU flagship framework confirms the need for a cross-sectoral, coherent and comprehensive approach and highlights the importance of a territorial dimension, which is crucial for agricultural resources and biodiversity.

The strands of the European Green Deal are strongly interlinked and reinforce one another in their efforts to transform the EU into a resource-efficient, climate-friendly and competitive economy. Many of the package's policy initiatives directly or indirectly affect the agriculture and agri-food sectors.



As an integral component of the European Green Deal, the F2F Strategy seeks to advance the cause of a fairer, healthier and more sustainable food system within the EU.

Its presentation marked the first time that the European Commission had put forward a comprehensive approach covering every step in the food supply chain, from production to consumption, and supporting farmers' adaptation.

## OBJECTIVES AND TYPES OF INTERVENTIONS

The F2F Strategy creates a policy framework structured around one horizontal objective and four specific objectives covering all levels of the food supply chain:

- sustainable food production;
- sustainable food processing and distribution;
- sustainable food consumption;
- prevention of food loss and food waste.

These objectives are supported by a number of targets indicating what the European Commission hopes to achieve and by when. The communication presenting the F2F Strategy – entitled 'A Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system' – includes a draft action plan, which lays out a swathe of new policy actions intended to revise and/or strengthen the EU's current food and farming regulations. The list of legislative proposals and non-regulatory initiatives is accompanied by an indicative timetable showing the actions planned for the period from 2020 to 2024.

The communication on the F2F Strategy recognises that the EU cannot achieve the overall aim of ensuring sustainable food systems on its own. The EU will therefore work with non-EU countries and international stakeholders to support a global move towards sustainable food systems.

## KEY AREAS OF THE F2F STRATEGY

**A.** Horizontal objective: legislative framework improving sustainable food systems and ensuring food security.

There are two policy actions under this objective:

- **putting forward a legislative proposal for a framework for a sustainable food system** before the end of 2023. The proposal will lay down common definitions, general principles and requirements for sustainable food systems and foods in order to guarantee that EU and national policies are consistent.
- **presenting a contingency plan for ensuring food supply and food security**, to be triggered in response to any kind of crisis (e.g. a crisis resulting from economic or climate conditions, a natural disaster, or pests), in 2021. Moreover, an **EU Food Security Observatory** could be established to monitor and report on the EU's capacity to guarantee the availability of supplies. Its activities could cover food



production and critical infrastructure, providing transparency and coordination in times of food security crisis.

**B. Food production objective: ensuring sustainable food production**

Ten policy actions are set out in this area. They aim to stimulate more resource-efficient, fairer and inclusive agricultural production.

- quantified targets directly concerning farming practices:
  - increasing the share of organically farmed land to 25% of the EU's agricultural land by 2030;
  - reducing nutrient losses by at least 50% while ensuring that there is no deterioration in soil fertility;
  - reducing fertiliser use by at least 20% by 2030;
  - reducing the overall use and risk of chemical pesticides by 50% and the use of more hazardous pesticides by 50% by 2030;
  - reducing sales of antimicrobials for farmed animals by 50% by 2030.

Livestock farming is one of the sectors most concerned by the F2F Strategy, which sets out measures that affect the sector from different angles (environmental, public health and animal welfare). The main initiatives are:

- an evaluation and revision of EU legislation on animal welfare, including legislation on animal transport and the slaughter of animals;
- a proposal for a revision of the Feed Additives Regulation to reduce the environmental impact of livestock farming (in particular methane and nitrous oxide emissions);
- specific actions targeting agriculture:
  - the adoption of recommendations for each Member State addressing the nine specific objectives of the common agricultural policy (CAP), before the draft CAP strategic plans are formally submitted. The communication on the F2F Strategy highlights, several times, the need to implement F2F-specific actions within the future CAP strategic plans;
  - a proposal for a revision of the Regulation on the Farm Accountancy Data Network to convert it into a Farm Sustainability Data Network;
  - a clarification of the scope of the competition rules set out in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union as regards collective initiatives that promote sustainability in food supply chain;
  - legislative initiatives to strengthen farmers' position in the supply chain and to capture a fair share of the added value of sustainable production by enhancing cooperation under the Regulation on the common organisation of agricultural markets (CMO Regulation);
  - an EU carbon farming initiative under the European Climate Pact to promote new green business. This initiative should include an EU carbon



farming manual to quantify farmers' emission reductions and carbon removals in farms and forestry systems.

**C. Food processing and distribution objective: stimulating sustainable food processing, wholesale, retail, hospitality, and food services practices**

This objective targets food processing operators, food services operators and retailers. There are seven **specific policy actions** in this area:

- initiatives to improve the **corporate governance network**, including a requirement for the food industry to integrate sustainability into corporate strategies;
- an EU code and monitoring framework for **responsible business and marketing conduct** in the food supply chain;
- initiatives to encourage the **reformulation of processed food**, including setting **maximum levels for certain nutrients**;
- initiatives to facilitate a shift to healthier diets, including setting up **nutrient profiles** to restrict the promotion of food high in salt, sugars and/or fat;
- a proposal for a revision of **EU legislation on food contact materials** in order to improve food safety and public health, support the use of sustainable packaging and contribute to reducing food waste;
- a proposal for a revision of EU **marketing standards** to ensure the uptake and supply of sustainable agricultural products and to strengthen the role of sustainability criteria, taking into account the impacts on food loss and waste;
- the implementation of an action plan on food fraud to achieve a level playing field for operators and strengthen the powers of control, including by considering greater use of the European Anti-Fraud Office's investigative capacities.

**D. Food consumption objective: promoting sustainable food consumption, facilitating the shift towards healthy, sustainable diets**

This objective is aimed at consumers and has one target: reversing the rise in overweight and obesity rates across the EU by 2030. It includes four policy actions that are intended to build a **food information policy** to empower consumers to make sustainable food choices:

- **developing a sustainable food labelling framework** with a single sustainable food logo that would cover the nutritional, environmental, climate and social dimensions of foodstuffs. Several key actions were identified to reach this goal:
  - harmonising **mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling** to enable consumers to make health-conscious food choices;
  - requiring an **indication of origin** for certain food products (e.g. for milk, and for milk and meat when used as ingredients);
  - determining the best way to go about setting **minimum mandatory criteria for sustainable food procurement** to promote healthy and sustainable diets, including organic products, in schools and public institutions.



## E. Food loss and waste prevention objective: reducing food loss and waste

There are two policy actions under this objective.

- a proposal for **EU-level targets for food waste reduction**: the European Commission will set a baseline and will propose legally binding targets to reduce food waste;
- a proposal for a revision of **EU rules on date marking** ('use by' and 'best before' dates).

## DEVELOPMENTS AND ACTIONS TAKEN

The Inception Impact Assessment (IIA) for the initiative to create a framework for a sustainable food system was made available for public feedback between 28 September 2021 and 26 October 2021. The open public consultation on this initiative was then published on 28 April 2022.

The 'fitness check' (evaluation) of the EU's legislation on the welfare of farmed animals was concluded in September 2022, following the publication of the IIA roadmap by the European Commission in July 2021 and the public consultation in January 2022. The Commission has now asked the European Food Safety Authority to draft scientific opinions on animal welfare.

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE F2F STRATEGY AND THE CAP STRATEGIC PLAN

The F2F policy actions place additional constraints on farming practices, as they aim to reduce the use of chemical pesticides, fertilisers and antibiotics, improve animal welfare standards and regulate food waste. These new components, which include both limitations and incentives, diverge significantly from the current CAP. The European Commission should therefore use F2F policy actions to update CAP tools and enhance the agricultural sector's role in achieving a fair, healthy, and environmentally friendly EU agri-food chain.

The CAP reform introduces a new decision-making level, influenced by the European Green Deal and F2F Strategy. This creates an integrated approach and builds stronger connections between the CAP and other relevant policies in the agri-food sector. The result is a multi-level CAP for the post-2020 period. The new CAP delivery model and the national strategic plans should enable Member States to develop tailor-made and more result-oriented measures for the agricultural sector in order to achieve the political priorities of the Green Deal and the F2F Strategy. Action 3 in the F2F Strategy confirms that CAP strategic plans have an instrumental role to play in achieving the EU's objective of becoming the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050 and in building a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly EU agri-food chain.

## ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

On 11 December 2019, the European Commission published its communication on the European Green Deal. One month later, the European Parliament adopted a



resolution welcoming the new initiative. The European Commission then unveiled the communication entitled 'A Farm to Fork Strategy – For a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system' on 20 May 2020, with the European Parliament adopting a resolution on the strategy on 20 October 2021.

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