



Commission acts for global food security and for supporting EU farmers and consumers

Brussels, 23 March 2022

Today, the European Commission has presented a range of **short-term and medium-term actions to enhance global food security** and to **support farmers and consumers in the EU** in light of rising food prices and input costs, such as energy and fertilisers. The surge in global commodity prices, further accelerated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, highlights again the need for EU agriculture and food supply chains to become more resilient and sustainable, in line with the [Farm to Fork](#) strategy.

The Commission is committed to taking all necessary measures to ensure that the EU, as a net food exporter and top agri-food producer, contributes to global food security, particularly in Ukraine, North Africa and the Middle East, which largely rely on imports of cereals, as well as in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. The EU is a lead provider of humanitarian and development assistance on food and food systems.

Food availability is currently not at stake in the EU, since the continent is largely self-sufficient for many agricultural products. However, our agricultural sector is a net importer of specific products, for example feed protein. This vulnerability, together with high input costs, such as fertilisers and fossil energy, is causing production challenges for farmers and risks driving up food prices.

Commission Executive Vice-President Valdis **Dombrovskis** said: *"Russia's war against Ukraine has created a multitude of problems including in relation to global food security. When it comes to food, now is the time for Europe to show its solidarity: to help Ukraine, its people and farmers, as well as vulnerable food-importing countries around the world that face surging prices and potential shortages. We will continue to provide humanitarian aid to alleviate the suffering of Ukrainians by securing their access to basic goods and services, notably food. At the same time, we need to avoid any export restrictions to keep a lid on food prices. While the EU itself does not face a food security risk, we should still address food affordability issues and take steps to make our agriculture and food supply chains more resilient and sustainable to cope with future crises."*

Agriculture Commissioner Janusz **Wojciechowski** said: *"We will not let Ukraine stand alone in the face of Russian aggression. Our first priority is to make sure that Ukrainians have enough food, fuel and water. We will also help them to continue planting and growing cereals and oilseeds, much needed for themselves and for the world and facilitate their exports. The EU is an agricultural superpower and we will ensure that our farmers have the Commission's full support to respond to the global needs for food. We will do this while working towards making our food supply chains more sustainable and resilient to future crises."*

Strengthening global food security

Food security in war-torn Ukraine is of great concern, particularly in besieged cities, with Russia seemingly deliberately targeting and destroying food storage locations.

The Commission is supporting Ukraine in developing and implementing a **short and medium term food security strategy** to ensure that inputs reach farms where possible, and that transportation and storage facilities are maintained to enable Ukraine to feed its citizens and to eventually regain its export markets.

An **EU Emergency Support Programme of €330 million** for Ukraine will help to secure access to basic goods and services, as well as the protection of the population. The programme seeks to help alleviate the suffering of Ukrainians by securing access to basic goods and services as well as their protection. Another important goal will be to reconstruct civilian small-scale infrastructure, strategic planning as well as ensuring energy security.

The Commission will ensure a **regular follow-up and analysis of food prices and food insecurity** and will continue its engagement in international and multilateral bodies (FAO, WTO, G7, G20) to coordinate policies. In addition, the EU has stepped up humanitarian assistance for the regions and

population groups most affected by food insecurity.

In the 2021-27 programme for international cooperation, the EU will work on developing the sustainability of food systems with about 70 partner countries. Moreover, at the [Nutrition for Growth Summit in Tokyo](#) in December 2021, the EU and its Member States committed to continue addressing malnutrition with a substantial pledge amounting to EUR 4.3 billion, **including at least €2.5 billion from the EU for international cooperation** with a nutrition objective in the period 2021-2024.

Moreover, the EU will continue to strongly advocate to **avoid export restrictions** and export bans on food and for a well-functioning single market.

This profound crisis confirms that we need to **accelerate globally the food system transition towards sustainability and resilience** to better prepare for future crises. As a follow-up to the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit, the Commission will engage in eight coalitions that all aim at food system transformation, resilience and sustainable productivity growth.

Supporting EU farmers and consumers

To improve affordability of food, Member States may also implement **reduced rates of Value Added Tax** and encourage economic operators to contain retail prices. Member States can also draw from EU funds such as the **Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)** which supports EU countries' actions to provide food and/or basic material assistance to the most vulnerable.

The newly set-up [European Food Security Crisis preparedness and response Mechanism](#) (EFSCM), gathering European and national administrations and private actors all along the supply chain, will carry out a thorough **mapping of risks and vulnerabilities of the EU food supply chain**, followed by recommendations and appropriate mitigation measures.

To fulfil its role as a global food provider that continues to be fully engaged in the environmental transition, the EU agricultural sector needs all our support. For this purpose, the Commission has adopted today the following measures:

- **A support package of €500 million**, including by making use of the crisis reserve, to support the producers most affected by the serious consequences of the war in Ukraine. On this basis, Member States could provide additional financial support to farmers to contribute to global food security, or address market disturbances due to increased input costs or trade restrictions. Support for farmers engaged in sustainable practices should be prioritised, whilst also ensuring that the measures target the sectors and farmers who are the hardest hit by the crisis.
- **More advances of direct payments**, as well as area- and animal-related rural development measures, to farmers as of 16 October 2022.
- **Market safety-net measures** to support the pigmeat market in view of the particularly difficult situation of the sector.
- An **exceptional and temporary derogation to allow the production of any crops for food and feed purposes on fallow land**, while maintaining the full level of the greening payment for farmers. This will enlarge the EU's production capacity in spite of the limited availability of fertile land.
- Specific temporary **flexibilities to existing import requirements on animal feed** will contribute to alleviating the pressure on the feed market.

The Commission has proposed a new, self-standing **Temporary Crisis Framework that also covers farmers, fertiliser producers and the fisheries sector**. This allows state aid to farmers affected by significant increases in input costs. Fertiliser prices and supplies for farmers will be monitored to ensure that the prospects for EU harvests are not jeopardised.

The Commission also proposes that **Member States communicate data on private stocks of essential commodities for food and feed** on a monthly basis to have a timely and accurate overview of their availability.

Reinforcing the resilience and sustainability of our food systems

Food sustainability is an integral part of food security. In implementing the necessary transitions set out in the **Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies**, the Commission will ensure that the overall productivity of EU agriculture is not undermined. This means a **greater use of innovation to contribute to increasing yields sustainably**, such as precision farming, new genomic techniques, improved nutrient management, integrated pest management, biological alternatives to chemical pesticides, etc.

Enhancing resilience, by **reducing the dependency of European agriculture on energy, energy intensive imports and feed imports** is more than ever a necessity. Resilience requires diversified import sources and market outlets through a robust multilateral and bilateral trade policy. Horizon Europe will invest in research and innovation to substitute the use of synthetic fertilisers. Greater efficiency in nitrogen use, transition to green ammonia for fertilisers, and biomass valorisation are among the proposals presented by the Commission. The Commission calls on Member States to use all the available instruments in their [CAP strategic plans](#) for the period 2023-2027 in that regard. This concerns for example the use of risk management tools, the development of precision farming or coupled support to boost protein crops.

For More Information

[Communication on safeguarding food security and reinforcing the resilience of food systems](#)

[Annex on safeguarding food security and reinforcing the resilience of food systems](#)

[Q&A on the measures adopted by the European Commission](#)

[Factsheet on measures to safeguard food security and support EU farmers](#)

[Press release on support for global action to transform food systems via eight Global Food Systems Summit Coalitions](#)

[The European food security crisis preparedness and response mechanism](#)

IP/22/1963

Press contacts:

[Miriam GARCIA FERRER](#) (+32 2 299 90 75)

[Thérèse LEREBOURS](#) (+32 2 296 33 03)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)

Related media

 [Cereal growing and harvesting](#)