

**CONCLUSIONS OF THE HEADS OF DELEGATIONS  
OF THE V4 PARLIAMENTARY AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEES  
(Bratislava, 14 October 2022)**

*We, the Agricultural Committees of the Parliaments of the V4 countries,  
which met in Bratislava on 14 October 2022,  
aware of our political responsibility for the fulfilment of the objectives  
of the Common Agricultural Policy for 2023-2027,  
adopt a joint declaration for the fulfilment of the objectives of European agriculture  
and the fulfilment of the objectives of the food security of the European area.*

**I. Reflections on the European Commission proposal on use of plant protection products**

- 1) We consider that the legislative proposal on the use of chemical plant protection products proposed by the European Commission as a part of the "Farm to Fork" strategy will significantly affect the production potential of the agricultural sector in the V4 countries.
- 2) We oppose the 50% flat rate reduction in the use of pesticides and other chemical plant protection substances from the current consumption of the individual Member States as proposed by the European Commission. We assess that it will undermine the competitiveness of our farms to the detriment of the old EU Member States and risk importing inferior foodstuffs from third countries. We stress that "Farm to fork" strategy reduction targets apply to European Union as a whole and in this context it gained support from the Council (in its conclusions) and the EP. Furthermore it has to be stressed that MS and the EP from the very beginning have been asking for delivering the impact assessment of the whole strategy.
- 3) We call on the European Commission:
  - a. to set uniform rules for the application of pesticides and chemical plant protection substances per hectare of agricultural area or per unit of production in the same way for all EU Member States;
  - b. to develop and present an approach that takes into account the progress made so far, the different starting points and the differences in agro-climatic conditions between the Member States;
  - c. to complete the analysis of the impact of reduction of use of plant protection products, in view of the current conditions marked by the pandemic and the war in Ukraine;
  - d. to carry out an impact analysis of the proposed ban on the application of plant protection products in sensitive areas, as defined in the draft regulation on the sustainable use of plant protection

products. In this context we consider that the Commission should review the definition of sensitive areas and the possibility of restricting the application of plant protection products in these areas;

- e. when removing the plant protection substances, to provide financial support for the research and securing the offer of sufficiently efficient alternative substances;
- f. in the context of reducing energy intensity, to strongly support investments in renewable energy sources (biomass-based energy, solar energy, wind energy, water energy and geothermal energy) for self-consumption on the company's own premises.

## **II. Water a basic source of life and a strategic resource, soil a non-renewable natural resource**

- 4) Water is the basis of life and an integral part of agricultural production and food production. We are of the opinion that water, as primary raw material, should have a priority position in CAP budgets from the point of view of the future and sustainability of agricultural policy. We consider it crucial to introduce measures at the EU level in the area of support for increasing the water-retention capacity of soils and establishing integrated rainwater management to prevent the negative impacts of climate change.
- 5) Soil is a non-renewable natural resource, and we cannot produce soil; we can only protect it and maintain its productive properties in the long term. We are asking the European Commission to monitor spending on eco-schemes aimed at the long-term sustainability and productive capacity of agricultural land, with a focus on the stability of soil organic carbon content and pH optimisation.

## **III. Food security and epizootological situation**

- 6) In addition to the production of raw materials, the food security of EU countries should clearly focus on the stability of specialised crop and livestock production. In the area of livestock production stability, we call on the European Commission to create sufficient financial and technical capacity for the development and research of vaccination against ASF and HPAI as well as for the consistent prevention and eradication of dangerous diseases and zoonoses (diseases transmissible from animals to humans).
- 7) We call for the early warning system to be amended to include an obligation to report serious zoonotic diseases, as well as diseases and pests in animals and plants, in order to prevent and protect against adverse impacts not only on the agricultural sector but also on humans.

- 8) We call for developing minimum quality standards for food imported into the EU from third countries for the sake of equal conditions and higher consumer protection.

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Bratislava on October 14, 2022