

# Campaigners urge ‘fundamental change’ in EU farming policy

Claudia Delpero - [31 Mar 2020 ENDSEurope](#)

More than 80 organisations from across Europe are urging the European Commission and member states to make a ‘fundamental change’ in the way they approach food production.

Public funds channeled to farmers via the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), trade agreements, EU regulation and research policy have so far favoured chemical-intensive agriculture, warned a coalition of groups including the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Pesticide Action Network Europe and Slow Food, in a letter to the commission’s executive vice-president Frans Timmermans.

They added that the use of synthetic pesticides has contributed to the decline of bees and pollinators, brought consequences for human health and reduced social and economic diversity in rural communities.

As the commission prepares an overhaul of the food system through its Farm to Fork strategy and a related biodiversity strategy, the coalition argued the new model should be based on “agroecological principles”. They called in particular for an 80% cut in synthetic pesticide use by 2030 and their complete phase-out by 2035.

A related European Citizens Initiative “[Save Bees and Farmers](#)” has already collected more than 270,000 signatures, of the one million required for the European Commission to react.

Eduardo Cuoco, IFOAM’s EU director, told ENDS the Farm to Fork strategy should not be treated in isolation from CAP reform, part of ongoing discussions on the next EU [long-term budget](#). “Publishing the Farm to Fork strategy should not be postponed past 29 April, the date the Commission committed to,” he added.

The coalition call comes as recent [reports](#) published by the European Commission showed “conflicts or incoherence” in how the CAP treats environmental matters.

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