

INTERNATIONAL DAIRY magazine



The 2022 EDA Dairy Policy Conference was visited by some 200 representatives of the EU dairysphere (photo: IDM)

EDA Dairy Policy Conference 2022

The New Policy Framework for European Dairy

The crisis in markets and energy supply triggered by the Ukraine war is no reason to neglect sustainability efforts. "Now is not the time to pause," said Michael Scannell, Director for Markets & Observatory at DG Agri, in a welcome address at the Dairy Policy Conference of EDA (European Dairy Association) in Brussels on 15 March.



The conference, which was attended by 130 live and 60 online participants, was held under the motto "The New Policy Framework for European Dairy". The importance of the food and dairy sector, emphasised EDA President

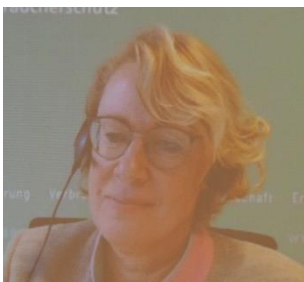
Giuseppe Ambrosi, has become much more prominent with the Ukraine crisis. In fact, the European dairy industry has a global leadership role to play in ensuring food security at a reasonable price. The crisis triggered by Putin should not be a reason to abandon the path towards a 100% sustainable dairy industry, Ambrosi stressed.



The Ukraine war has global consequences, explained Scannell, particularly with regard to the supply of wheat to North Africa and the Middle East. Ukraine itself is now also facing an emergency situation, as the fields of this country cannot be cultivated or can only be cultivated insufficiently. "We may have to supply Ukraine as well," the EU official said. In addition to energy imports, the EU's dependence on feed and fertiliser from Eastern Europe is also a problem. But the EU entered the crisis from a strong position, and the benefits of the CAP, especially for food security, have now been proven, Scannell said. The overall goal now must be to reduce the EU's dependence on fossil fuels. The Green Deal is not a contradiction to overcoming the crisis, said Scannell, who is convinced that EU food & dairy will master both challenges.

The EU Commission has set up a Food Security Crisis Committee and will adopt a package of measures to address the crisis on 23 March 2022. Brussels will make funds available to the member states, which are to increase them nationally to support the most affected sectors and increase the production of feed and food. Milk, however, is not a priority here in view of the current milk prices.

Regional circular farming



Barbara Otte-Kinast, Minister of Agriculture of the German Bundesland Lower Saxony, stressed in an online presentation that the Ukraine crisis has highlighted the importance of a functioning food and agricultural sector. Otte-Kinast said she wanted to prevent structural disruption in any case, as this would have far-reaching social and also ecological consequences. Animal husbandry has an important climate protection function, especially in grassland. Although milk prices are currently high, one has to ask how much of this ends up with producers, Ott-Kinast said, stressing that the position of agriculture in the market must be improved. The politician sees a pillar for the future in regional economies with stable supply chains and reintegration of previously outsourced processes. This is circular economy as outlined in the farm-to-fork strategy.

CO₂ reduction in practice



Marie Thérésè Bonneau, Vice-President of the French Milk Producers' Federation (FNPL), explained a way in which farmers can finance their commitment to CO₂ reduction. For this purpose, the organisation France Carbon Agri Assciation (FCAA) was founded. Participating farmers set up individual programmes for CO₂ reduction, partners in industry and relevant organisations buy CO₂ certificates based on this and thus reduce the emission burden. There are now 950 farms participating in FCAA, which together reduce 600,000 t of CO₂. The industry partners pay 30 € per ton of CO₂.

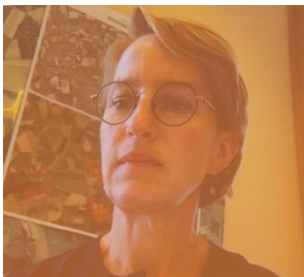
The view of young milk producers



Dr Anne-Catherine Dalcq, dairy farm owner and Vice-President of the Walloon Fédération des Jeunes Agriculteurs (Young Farmers' Federation), stressed that the next generation of dairy farmers is ready for the necessary change. However, in view of the diversity of farms, no uniform set of measures should be imposed on agriculture. All measures have to be defined on the basis of reliable data and be geared to the long term. This applies in particular to agricultural services for the ecosystem, and farmers must receive a fair share of the added value.



Stanislav Nemeč from the Representation of the Czech Republic in Brussels explained the focus his country will set in agriculture during the upcoming EU Presidency from 1 July



Clotilde Eudier, herself a farmer and vice-president of the French department of Normandy, outlined in an online contribution how her region wants to secure the future of dairy farming. The focus is on keeping farmers financially viable even in this time of change