

## EDA Dairy Policy Conference 2024

#NextGenEUDairy



EDA President **Giuseppe Ambrosi** opened our conference highlighting the responsibility of the next European Parliament legislature:

*The European Union is the political and institutional framework that provides the operational basis for all European dairies, whatever milk volume they process:*

- the **Single Market**,
- the **EU trade policy**, and
- our **Common Agricultural Policy**, that will need to finance the green transition.



EDA President Giuseppe Ambrosi opening the Conference

**N**ext Generation EU Dairy. Yesterday, EDA held its Annual Dairy Policy Conference in Brussels, where we were joined by over 150 dairy executives and experts from Europe and beyond.

With only two months before the 2024 European Elections in June, the theme of this year's conference was '**Next Generation EU 2024–2029**', dedicated to discussing the future of European agriculture for the next political period together with speakers: **Wolfgang Burtscher** (Director General, DG AGRI), **Albert de Groot** (CEO, Vreugdenhil), **Maks Fasteyev** (INFAGRO, Ukraine), and candidates for the 2024 European Parliament Elections **Christophe Hansen** (CSV, LU), **Jessika van Leeuwen** (BBB, NL) and **Didier Lepertois** (Alliance Rurale, FR).



Giuseppe Ambrosi, Jessika van Leeuwen, Christophe Hansen, Didier Lepertois. 'Next Generation EU 2024–2029'





EDA President Giuseppe Ambrosi presenting the EDA Focus on the 2024 European Elections

## The EDA Focus on the 2024 European Elections

EDA President Giuseppe Ambrosi introduced the new EDA brochure, 'EDA Focus on the 2024 European Elections', in which we highlight the importance of the European Elections for European dairy, as well as the significance of dairy for Europe. The focus featured forewords by the President of the EU Parliament, **Roberta Metsola**, and by the President of the EU Commission, **Ursula von der Leyen**, as well as contributions by MEPs **Manfred Weber**, **Norbert Lins**, **Ulrike Müller**, **Paolo De Castro**, **Carmen Avram**, and **Martin Häusling**. [See the first page of the Focus on page 5.](#)

[Read it here](#)



## EU Agriculture in a new world

Under the headline "EU Agriculture in a New World" **Wolfgang Bartscher**, (Director-General of DG AGRI), offered insight into the forthcoming trajectory of EU agriculture, stressing that agriculture is now a top priority for the EU Commission. He underlined the Commission's commitment to addressing the evolving landscape of European farming while emphasizing sustainability and resilience.

A cornerstone of Wolfgang Bartscher's address was the imperative to listen to the concerns of farmers. He outlined two EU packages of measures to address administrative simplification and reinforce the position of farmers in the food chain. Additionally, he noted that in the latter, the dairy sector has been a pioneer and underlined the need to look not only at the negative impact of livestock but also at its positive effects and communicate about them.



Wolfgang Bartscher (Director General, DG AGRI)

## Setting the EU Dairy Agenda 2030

Continuing the theme of looking to the future **Albert de Groot** (CEO, Vreugdenhil) spoke about the challenges in transitioning towards sustainability while remaining competitive on the international market. He called upon the new EU leaders to support in three key areas:

**Firstly**, policies that maintain the competitiveness of the EU *lactosphère*, including a focus on the smooth functioning of the Single Market, strong trade policies, and support through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). **Secondly**, the need for assistance in transforming to a more sustainable dairy chain. This requires a robust environmental and social pillar of the CAP, clear guidance for farmers, and shared financial burdens. **Finally**, policymakers need to support sustainability and embrace science-based approaches. Rewarding sustainability based on performance, harmonizing sustainability claims and reporting, and enacting stimulating legislation are essential steps in this direction.



Albert de Groot (CEO, Vreugdenhil)

## Ukraine-on our way to Europe

The third speaker of the first session, **Maks Fasteyev** (Infagro, Ukraine), spoke about the state of the Ukrainian dairy sector, its challenges during the ongoing Russian war, and its potential to emerge as a robust, competitive industry within the Single Market.



Maks Fasteyev (Infagro, Ukraine)

## EDA's Annual Cheese Buffet and Luxlait's Yoghurt Buffet

The conference concluded with EDA's famous Cheese Buffet featuring the best of European cheeses, showcasing the craftsmanship, culture, and tradition of the dairy sector, sponsored by our French, Irish, Dutch and Italian Members. During the break, attendees were also treated to a special yogurt buffet sponsored by **Luxlait**—*merci, grazie, dank u wel, go raibh maith agat and merci vilmolls*.



Gilles Gérard (CEO, Luxlait)

## European Dairy and Next Generation EU 2024-2029

The second session of the conference was dedicated to candidates for the 2024 European Parliament: **Christophe Hansen** (CSV, LU), **Jessika van Leeuwen** (BBB, NL), and **Didier Lepertois** (Alliance Rurale, FR). They all outlined their goals for the future of European agriculture before engaging in a vibrant panel discussion.



Jessika van Leeuwen (BBB, NL)



Didier Lepertois (Alliance Rurale, FR)



Christophe Hansen (CSV, LU)

#useyourvote



**Christophe Hansen**  
CSV, LU

"Farmers are seen as problem, not as solution - yet we all want excellent food "made in Europe". To achieve sustainability we have to focus on the technological side, to finance farmers to get new tech on the ground."



**Jessika van Leeuwen**  
BBB, NL

"If we want to save hard working famers in Europe, action is needed now, because food production is the most important sector we have."



**Didier Lepertois**  
Alliance Rurale, FR

"We have lost our sense of purpose in the common European project - Our confidence is shrinking, and this is even stronger felt in rural Europe."



## EDA Focus

# 2024 European Elections

**“As EDA, we are a convinced pro-Europe voice and we are grateful to the President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola and to the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, for their forewords to this EDA Focus - 2024 European Elections”,**



**Roberta Metsola,**  
President of the European Parliament



**Ursula von der Leyen,**  
President of the European Commission

“ The challenges our Union has faced in the past years have been of unprecedented nature and have undeniably forced us to rethink the way we do things. The world is changing and we must be ready to change with it. This is a team effort. Only together can we build a strong and resilient European future for all. The European agri-food and dairy sector has always been and will continue to be a key pillar of this European future. This is about far more than just food production and farming. It is about supporting our rural communities, promoting sustainable production and healthy consumption, ensuring food security as well as contributing to Europe’s economic prosperity. Ultimately, it is about people.

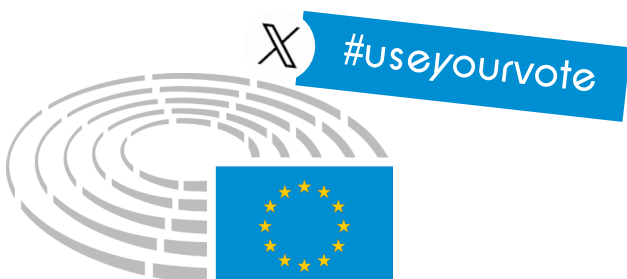
In June 2024, we will elect a new European Parliament. Our Union prides itself on its democracy. We listen to and defend the interests of all people, to constantly change and improve for the benefit of all of our communities and sectors. This is why I can only encourage every European to make their voice heard by voting in the upcoming elections, because every vote matters. Europe’s future matters. A future of hope, change, possibility for all. For a strong and resilient agricultural future.”

“ In Europe, dairy has deep cultural and culinary roots. Every country is proud of its local speciality that uses dairy ingredients. From Crème Fraîche to Bryndza, Greek Yoghurt to Irish Butter, or Manchego to Italian Gelato – European taste is enriched by diverse dairy traditions that stretch back centuries. In fact, there are more than 250 EU-protected geographical indications for dairy foods in Europe. Behind every such delicacy, there is a profession. It is the dairy farmers, cheesemakers, veterinarians, agronomists, food scientists, quality control inspectors, and artisans who guarantee that European dairy is the best in the world.

Since its beginning, the European Union has supported dairy products and professions. With our trade power, we actively help market European dairy products around the world. With our Common Agricultural Policy, we protect dairy farmers and stakeholders from market volatility or natural disasters.

And the European Green Deal actively supports sustainable innovations that strengthen Europe’s competitiveness. I am proud that European dairy professionals are leaders in precision dairy farming, alternative feed sources, methane reduction techniques, water recycling systems, renewable energy on farms, and eco-friendly packaging. Together, we are protecting not only our cultural and culinary traditions in Europe, but also the livelihoods of dairy workers and the wellbeing of all citizens.

The role of the European Dairy Association in ensuring that the voice of your stakeholders is heard in Europe is key. I look forward to continuing our close cooperation to ensure that dairy has a promising future in Europe.”





## MEPs favourite dairy products



“ Milk is an essential part of our diets and of our traditions all over Europe. My preferred dairy product is my daily yogurt in the morning.”

**MEP Manfred Weber (EPP, DE)**

“ A glass of fresh milk and Allgäuer Bergkäse G.I.: that's how I like to start my day!”



**MEP Ulrike Müller (Renew Europe, DE)**



“ I love yogurt. Together with a few pieces of fresh fruits, yogurt is a very light and refreshing dessert or the basis for a healthy muesli.”

**MEP Norbert Lins (EPP, DE)**

“ Cottage cheese, mozzarella, ricotta, burrata, emmental, hard cheese, soft cheese, any day, every day. I can't choose, I love them all and simply have to have at least a cheese meal



**MEP Carmen Avram (S&D, RO)**



“ My mind goes to Parmigiano Reggiano: great alone, even better with a glass of good wine, it is ideal to enhance and develop any Mediterranean

**MEP Paolo De Castro (S&D, IT)**

“ As a dairy farmer, I enjoy drinking real fresh and organic milk from my farm. And when it comes to cheese, my organic Hofkäse is a culinary treasure. ”



**MEP Martin Häusling (Greens/EFA, DE)**