

EU Livestock Strategy: the right framework for a competitive and resilient animal agriculture in Europe “One common objective: to make livestock thrive”

EDA welcomes a strategy built on resilience, competitiveness, sustainability, territoriality and excellence, recognising that Europe's diverse livestock sectors require tailored solutions to secure their long-term competitiveness and sustainability

The European Dairy Association (EDA) supports the publication of the European Commission's Livestock Strategy, recognising it as an important step towards a resilient, competitive and sustainable future for European livestock farming.

"The EU Livestock Strategy sends an important signal from the Commission: a strong livestock sector is indispensable for food security, resilient rural areas and for the competitiveness of our agri-food chain. EU Commissioner Christophe Hansen and his services have not only listened carefully to the agri-food sector, but have well understood its realities and needs, incorporating them into a comprehensive strategy in a short timeframe. As European dairy, we are particularly pleased to see many of the principles that have guided our sector reflected in the Strategy. It is good to see that many of the solutions already developed within dairy are taken as examples for shaping a future-proof livestock sector," stated EDA secretary general Alexander Anton.

EDA welcomes the acknowledgement that Europe's livestock sector is characterised by a broad diversity of production systems and territorial realities. This is especially true for dairy, which encompasses the widest range of different farm management systems across Europe. Recognising this diversity is essential to designing policies that respond to local conditions rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach.

The Strategy affirms economic sustainability and profitability as fundamental conditions for achieving environmental and social sustainability. Emphasis is placed in particular on competitiveness as a guiding principle for the future of the sector, as also highlighted during EDA's livestock workshop with the European Commission and stakeholders on 24 September 2025.

As the largest agricultural sector in the European Union, dairy is the economic backbone of rural Europe. Maintaining a competitive dairy sector is therefore essential for food production, rural development and Europe's strategic autonomy.

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) remains the key instrument to support farmers' incomes, strengthen resilience and facilitate the transition towards increasingly sustainable production systems. A strong CAP will continue to play a central role in safeguarding the long-term viability of European dairy farming and processing.

EDA also welcomes the recognition of the many environmental benefits of dairy farming, including on circularity, grassland management, biodiversity preservation and soil health, nutrient cycling, and climate action. It is encouraging to see the acknowledgement of animal welfare as a key element of sustainable livestock production, building on the dairy sector's long-standing commitment and progress in this area.

We also commend the complementary Protein Action Plan, which will increase Europe's protein autonomy and the resilience of the livestock sector. This is already deeply rooted in the dairy sector, where around 70% of the protein intake of European dairy cows comes from roughage, a sustainable and locally produced feed source that contributes to increasing the economic and environmental sustainability of the European dairy sector (*see EDA's press release on the Protein Action Plan*).

EDA looks forward to continuing its constructive cooperation with the European Commission and stakeholders through the Livestock Workstream, ensuring that the implementation of the Strategy remains economically viable and adapted to the diversity of European livestock production systems, while promoting excellence across the European livestock sector.

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN DAIRY ASSOCIATION

The European Dairy Association is the voice of dairy processors in the European Union. The membership of EDA consists of the associations of dairy processors in EU Member States.

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