

ENSA'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S FARM TO FORK STRATEGY

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European Plant-based Foods Association

The European Plant-based Foods Association (ENSA) strongly supports the objectives of the European Commission's Farm to Fork strategy to accelerate the transition towards a sustainable food system, through sustainable food production, processing and consumption.

We call for the recognition of the contribution that plant-based foods make to a healthy and sustainable diet through their inclusion in dietary guidelines that take into account both nutrition and environmental sustainability.

Sustainable dietary guidelines should be used as reference points to encourage consumers to rebalance their diets by including more diverse plant-based foods and to support European farmers to produce high-quality plant protein and other sustainable crops such as oats, almonds etc.

HOW CAN THE EU SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE PLANT-BASED DIETS FROM FARM TO FORK:

- ✎ Encourage Member States to use current CAP instruments to support the production of plant proteins e.g. French National Protein Plan. Farmers growing crops for plant-based foods must receive financial and technical support to accompany them during the transition.
- ✎ Make EU funds for the promotion of agricultural products available for processed plant-protein products, as announced in the Commission's Plant Protein Strategy in 2018.
- ✎ Extend the EU School scheme to plant-based alternatives made from EU crops.
- ✎ Support organic consumption by allowing the use of agricultural ingredients that are naturally rich in calcium in organic plant-based alternatives to dairy products.
- ✎ Continue to allow plant-based foods manufacturers to communicate to consumers what their products stand for by using terms that they are familiar with (e.g. burger) while ensuring that they are aware of the plant-based nature of the products (e.g. plant-based alternative to yogurt).
- ✎ Encourage Green Public Procurement, including the introduction of Veggie Days in public administrations.
- ✎ Provide for fair taxation for plant-based foods. In certain Member States, plant-based alternatives are subject to higher VAT rates than animal products. When dairy products are exempted from sugar taxes, plant-based alternatives should benefit from the same exemption.
- ✎ Allow consumers to compare products by including plant-based alternatives in the same categories as comparable animal products in nutrient profiling schemes (e.g. Nutriscore) based on total sugar content.
- ✎ Develop a science-based methodology for calculating and labelling the overall environmental footprint of products, which allows consumers to compare products that are alternatives in terms of use and consumption moments.

REFERENCES

A strong scientific consensus in favour of rebalancing our diets towards more plant-based nutrition

The World Resource Institute report [*Creating a sustainable Food Future, a menu of solutions to feed nearly 10 billion people by 2050*](#) shows that while there is no silver bullet to keep our food systems emissions below the limits of a 1.5°C temperature increase, a shift in diets, notably including smaller quantities of products of animal origin and more plant-based foods, has the biggest potential in terms of reduction of CO2 emissions.

Prof Marco Springmann's article published Nature [*Options for keeping the food system within environmental limits*](#) concluded that while no single measure is enough to address these challenges "GHG emissions cannot be sufficiently mitigated without dietary changes towards more plant-based diets".

The IPCC [*Special report on climate change and land*](#) found that "Balanced diets, featuring plant-based foods, such as those based on coarse grains, legumes, fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds, and animal-sourced food produced in resilient, sustainable and low-GHG emission systems, present major opportunities for adaptation and mitigation while generating significant co-benefits in terms of human health (high confidence)".

The EAT-Lancet report [*Our Food in the Anthropocene: Healthy Diets From Sustainable Food Systems*](#) suggested that the daily dietary pattern of a planetary health diet consists of approximately 35% of calories as whole grains and tubers, protein sources mainly from plants – but still including reasonable amount of animal protein – and 500g per day of vegetables and fruits.

The European Commission's [*Evaluation study of the impact of the CAP on climate change and greenhouse gas emissions*](#) pointed out that "consumption patterns – and particularly the consumption of livestock – are a major determinant of GHG emissions by the agriculture sector (...) there is room for a more careful consideration of how far agricultural policy drives dietary patterns".

The report of Professors Schepers and Annemans [*The potential health and economic effects of plant-based food patterns in Belgium and the United Kingdom*](#) concluded that "A wider implementation of plant-based eating would lead to large net economic gains for society and improved health outcomes for the population", having assessed the health and economic effects of Mediterranean and soy-containing diets.

As far as the economic pillar of sustainability is concerned, European Commission's own [*Report on the development of plant proteins in the EU*](#) recognised that cultivating plant-proteins for food brings highest profit margins for farmers.