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Join the Food Revolution Newsletter

Issue n°9 February 2015

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WHAT'S ON THE PLATE?

Upcoming Events

GREEN INSIGHT INTO EU FOOD POLICY

Vote on mandatory country of origin labelling of processed meat: Greens hope the European Commission will finally address the issue

On Wednesday 11 February, the European Parliament vote in favour of a resolution initiated by the Greens/EFA Group on mandatory country of origin labelling of meat in processed food (such as ready-to-eat lasagne, nuggets, pizza etc).

This issue has been a long-standing demand of the Greens and the European Parliament and showed its relevance again in early 2013, when the [horsemeat scandal](#) shone the spotlight on the lack of transparency in our food supply chain. While [90%](#) of EU consumers want to know where their meat comes from we now hope that the European Commission will finally legislate on this issue.

As Greens we also care about animal welfare and the way food is produced and hope the EU will also consider these aspects in future labelling policies.

[Read article posted ahead of the vote](#) EN/FR

[Read Press release following the vote](#) EN/FR/DE

End of Milk quota: The Greens call for a more balanced approach to prevent crisis.

On 27th January, the Agriculture Committee of the European Parliament [discussed](#) the end of milk quota in the EU. As the end of the milk quota system draws nearer, the dairy industry claims that "milk will remain the white gold for the next decade". However, the expected growth in exports out of the EU is likely to turn out to the detriment of European farmers, who have not received cost-covering prices for their milk for many years. Additionally, the implementation of policies on environment, animal-welfare and development are being endangered through the EU's productivist and export-driven agenda.

Contributing to the up-coming initiative report on milk policy, the Greens/EFA group is demanding a more balanced approach, which allows farmers to take responsibility and reduce production ahead of crisis.

[Read More](#)

'TTIP and Food What's Cooking?': media tools from the conference ready to use and share

As follow-up of the conference held on 10 December we have prepared a first set of tools to use and share with your network.

This includes the [video clip](#) from the event that compiles interventions of our MEPs and guest speakers; [Photos](#) of the event including MEPs, speakers and the audience; an overview of the [TTIP&Food discussion held on Twitter](#) ahead of the event.

[Live Stream, Programme and all media here](#)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The European Parliament Sustainable Food Steering group takes stock in the debate on Sustainable Diets

On 28 January, the European Parliament hosted a roundtable organised by the Barilla Foundation (BCFN) on 'Sustainable Diets'. The European Parliament Sustainable Food Steering Group was represented at the meeting. This was the opportunity to remind the role of the Steering group as unified voice on sustainable food issues and its wish to garner MEPs' support to facilitate dialogue on sustainable food matters within the EP, with the other European institutions, as well as with civil society and industry. The Steering Group

spotted two major points it considers as crucial in the debate on sustainable diets. The reduction of meat consumption and the link between the current agricultural practices and climate change. Participants to the meeting urged again the Commission to come forward with the long-awaited Communication on Sustainable Food, but got confronted with an evasive answer.

On 4 February, at the public hearing held by the Greens/EFA with European Commission vice-president Frans Timmermans, the latter answered the following to a question asked by MEP Bart Staes on the unpublished Sustainable Food Communication: "I personally find that as long as we worldwide waste half of the world's food we produce, that's a serious problem. Sustainable food, just like with the Circular Economy, will have to include the whole circle if it wants to be relevant. I will gather with my colleague commissioners to see how we can best deal with it. We need to include food waste when looking at sustainable food, I agree with you on that."

The Commission should answer soon the second letter sent by the Sustainable Food Steering Group on the issue, hopefully with more clear elements on the follow-up to the Communication.

[Press coverage of the Sustainable Diet event organised by the Barilla Foundation](#)

[Webstream Greens/EFA public meeting with Timmermans](#) (watch minute 27'00"")

How TTIP undermines food safety and animal welfare: report by Friends of the Earth Europe

While EU and US negotiators met in Brussels from 2d to 6th February, and as hundreds of citizens demonstrated against the unfair transatlantic trade deal, [Friends of the Earth Europe](#) (FoEE) published a briefing which analyses [proposals](#) for TTIP chapter on food safety and animal welfare, published by the European authorities in January 2015.

The draft proposal provides a clear indication of EU trade officials' intentions for the final agreement. FoEE briefing explains how the proposed text will undermine existing health and safety regulations in both the EU and the US.

The analysis raises a number of concerns including: the priority given to maximizing trade, the shift of power from national governments to a new trade committee, the threat to the ability of local authorities to set higher standards, the risk of minimal health and safety checks for novel foods (including GMOs, cloned animals, and nano materials), non-binding provisions for animal welfare, and the required adoption of international food standards established through the World Trade Organisation.

[Video of the demonstration against TTIP on 4th February](#)

Good Food and Good farming conference: get inspired towards sustainable food systems and agricultural transition

The Agricultural and Rural Convention 2020 (ARC2020), Friends of the Earth Europe and IFOAM EU organised a civil society gathering and conference on February 10th and 11th 2015 in Brussels, hosted by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC).

This event brought together representatives from civil society, grassroots groups, researchers, national and regional authorities and policymakers to discuss the assessment of the implementation of the reformed CAP and its prospects on sustainable agriculture. The gathering also aimed to identify milestones to support transition of food and agriculture systems based on agroecological approaches.

[More information and presentations will soon available here](#)

[Watch the video of the first day of the event](#)

Who's got the power?: tackling imbalances in agricultural supply chains

Over recent decades, the growth of supermarket chains, the increase in the number of processed food products they sell and the consolidation of retail, processing, logistics' chains and other related industries (seeds and chemicals), have led to the emergence of new procurement practices. Supply chains sourcing agricultural products have become more global and tightly coordinated. Lead buyer requirements and standards have led to the restructuring of the chains, favouring medium-size and large producers and exporters that can more easily meet their demands.

The focus has switched from what the supplier can offer to what the buyer requires. Farmers no longer produce first and then look for a market. Instead, those who control supply chains decide what they believe the consumer needs, and then design the supply chains required to deliver those products.

Although the chain as a whole is quite profitable, the terms of trade for smaller producers have declined, in the Global South as well as in Europe; the gap between producer prices and retail prices has grown; workers' conditions have degraded; and smaller-scale farmers are finding themselves increasingly excluded from higher value markets.

In this context, the Fair Trade movement has commissioned a study to explore and analyse the issue of power concentration and unfair trading practices in agricultural chains: What is the relationship between buyer power and unfair trading practices (UTPs)? What are the impacts on small farmers, workers and the environment? How can legal systems regulate buyer power effectively? This is what this study aims to disclose.

[Read summary of the study](#)

[Read full study](#)

JOIN THE FOOD REVOLUTION: THE STORY OF THE MONTH

Tineke Alberts took over the family farm from her parents back in 2008. When restarting the business she saw no other option than going organic!

Since 2012 Tineke has been certified Demeter biodynamic farmer. Together with her partner, they run several projects on biodiversity conservation and organic alternative to pesticides. They also offer volunteer stays via the WWOOF programme.

Get to know more about [Tineke](#) and [Join the Food Revolution](#) yourself!

WHAT'S ON THE PLATE?

23/02: Joint Hearing ENVI/AGRI Committees: ["Cloning of animals for farming purposes"](#), European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium

16-17/03: Agriculture and Fisheries Council

20-30/03: [Pesticide Action Week](#)

Recommended

Press release

<https://unsplash.com/photos/gray-concrete-building-covered-trees-dqXiw7nCb9Q>



[EU Parliament continues to support big Agri over small...](#)

24.04.2024

Publication

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[Eating Greens](#)

11.04.2024

Press release

<https://unsplash.com/de/fotos/luftaufnahmen-von-grunen-baumen-und-feldern-bei-tag-ZYohVTeA1xk>

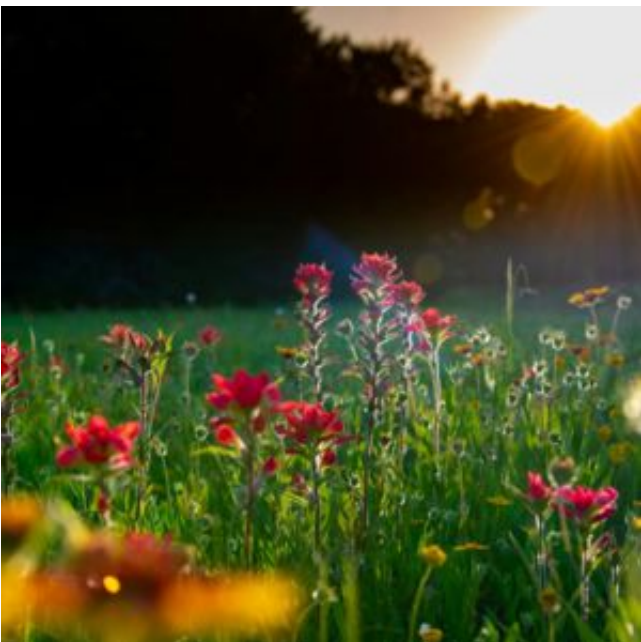


[Greens/EFA condemns Commission and MEPs' attempts to r...](#)

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Press release

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[MEPs vote in favour of saving nature](#)

27.02.2024

Contact person



Nelly Baltide

Advisor on Development

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