

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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## **Belgium EU-28**

**Post:** Brussels USEU

### **European Commission presents results of its consultation on CAP**

**Report Categories:**

Policy and Program Announcements

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**Report Highlights:**

On 2 February 2017, the European Commission launched a consultation on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in order to better understand where the current policy can be simplified and modernized. The findings of the consultation were presented at a stakeholders conference convened in Brussels on Friday, July 7, 2017. Along with the Commission's own on-the-ground analysis of the current state of play and an assessment of the potential impact of any proposed policy changes, the findings will feed into a Communication on modernizing and simplifying the CAP. The Communication is scheduled to be published before the end of 2017.

**General Information:**

More than 322,000 submissions to the Commission's on-line consultation "[Modernizing and Simplifying the Common Agricultural Policy](#)" were received from EU farmers, citizens organizations, and other interested parties. Agriculture Commissioner Phil Hogan asserted at the stakeholder conference that the *"...response to the public consultation shows the level of interest in the CAP, which continues to support a dynamic agricultural sector, ensures safe and high quality food for 508 million citizens and provides for significant investment in rural areas."*

The vast majority of respondents is of the view that managing agricultural policy at a pan-EU level rather than at an individual MS level ensures a level playing field within the single market, ensures that agriculture can respond more effectively to shared challenges including environmental protection and mitigating climate change, maintains economic, social and territorial cohesion across the EU, and encourages sharing best practices.

Responses to the consultation also demonstrated the perceived need for the CAP to ensure a fair standard of living for farmers. Most respondents recognized that farm incomes are lower than the EU average, and that farmers receive only a small amount of the final consumer price for food. Direct income support for farmers is considered to be the most effective way to ensure a fair standard of living for farmers.

The CAP should also encourage farmers to play their part in mitigating climate change, protecting the environment and biodiversity, reducing soil degradation, and ensuring a more sustainable use of fertilizers and pesticides.

Citizens and farmers alike made it known that the CAP should be more simple and less bureaucratic in order to achieve these aims.

The findings of the consultation will feed into the Commission's reflections on the future of the CAP. An impact assessment of possible future policy proposals will be made by the Commission, followed by a Communication on simplifying and modernizing the CAP to be issued before the end of 2017. The Commission intends to make formal legislative proposals in early 2018. The new CAP should be applicable from 2020.

See also: "Post-2020 CAP consultation launched" – GAIN Report Number E17010 – published 2/2/2017