

## Structured Dialogue on Agriculture” - starting in a rush !

European Dairy Association @EDA\_Dairy · 1s  
 #SOTEU by @vonderleyen finally acknowledging the European agri-food sector, officially visualized by 🥛 milk processing! Vive l'Europe et vive le lait !



When EU Commission President Dr. **Ursula von der Leyen** voiced the idea of a "structured dialogue on agriculture" in her State of the Union speech in September 2023, the official accompanying video showed milk processing. On January 18, 2024, 125 days after the State of the Union announcement, the EU Commission did send out invitations for a kick-off plenary meeting on January 25, 2024.

Today's farmers' protests in quite a few Member States may have hastened the process of setting up this 'strategic dialogue on agriculture' format, but the invitation list, with a wide range of NGOs and only a few EU umbrella organizations of the food chain, i.e., the farming sector and their processors, would have certainly deserved a more thoughtful approach. As important a dialogue on the future of agriculture is, as urgent is a constructive discussion on addressing today's concerns of the agri-food community.

We have shared our preliminary input in writing with EU Commission Vice President **Maroš Šefčovič**, who clearly underlined his intention to reach out to economic stakeholders and expressed his hope to be able to count on our continued dairy engagement.

## MIV Dairy Meetings at the Green Week in Berlin

The President of our German member association Milchindustrie-Verband e.V., (MIV), **Peter Stahl** (CEO, Hochland) welcomed the 'crème de la crème' of the German dairy industry in the Bavarian embassy in Berlin for a podium discussion on: "Who decides on our food: The citizen or politics?"

The very vivid discussion between dairy experts like **Michael Müller** (Andechser Molkerei Scheitz) and Dr. **Katrin Lehmann** (MIV) and the President of the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE), Dr. **Margareta Büning-Fesel** also touched on the different basic concepts of citizens responsibility underlying the food labelling approaches, especially when it comes to the nutri-score.



MIV President Peter Stahl in the Bavarian Embassy in Berlin

## CDG Milk: EDA and Friesland-Campina highlight the sustainability efforts in dairy

Last week, the EU Commission organized its meeting of the Civil Dialogue Group on Milk, a consultative group aimed at exchanging views with stakeholders along the dairy value chain.

Sustainability in dairy was one of the highlights of the meeting, emphasizing the environmental efforts implemented by dairy companies in Europe and the proactive approach of the industry in climate action.

**Sanne Dekker**, co-chair of the EDA Working Group on sustainability, highlighted FrieslandCampina's actions toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions. **Alberto Babolin**, EDA, stressed the importance of the [Dairy Product Environmental Footprint](#) (Dairy PEF) methodology—the harmonized method for assessing the environmental footprint of dairy products in Europe. This methodology, developed by the dairy industry, is crucial in the context of the Green Claims discussions. The Dairy PEF is a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) methodology approved by the EU Commission and Member States in 2018, now defined as the reference methodology for environmental footprint assessment in dairy.

*The Grüne Woche is an excellent opportunity to promote our dairy exports, to catch up with our members, and to discuss agricultural policy with aspiring European politicians, such as **Sander Smit** of the Dutch Framers Citizens Party. "*



Dutch Famers Citizens Party lead candidate EP Election Sander Smit and EDA Director Trade and Economics Laurus van Delft

## EDA in joint Industry call to sign the EU-Merocsur trade deal



Sanne Dekker (FrieslandCampina), Alberto Babolin (EDA) speaking the CDG Milk at the EU Commission



In a joint call, the European Dairy Association (EDA) and 23 associations representing diverse European industries and businesses have come together to advocate for the expedited conclusion of trade negotiations between the European Union and Mercosur.

As the global economic landscape continues to evolve, the urgency of solidifying these ties cannot be overstated. The time to act is now, and both the EU and Mercosur leaders are urged to seize the opportunity to strengthen collaboration, boost economic integration, and fulfill their sustainable development commitments.

Read the full statement [here](#).

## Dutch dairy in Berlijn!

The opening of the Dutch pavilion at the Green Week this year focused on dairy, with Dutch Agriculture Minister **Piet Adema** and NZO Director **Joep Rats** opening the pavilion while enjoying a delicious Dutch cheese. EDA director of Trade & Economics, **Laurus van Delft**, represented EDA during the opening days of the fair:

## EPP President defends EU agriculture

At a European People's Party's (EPP) New Year's Reception, MEP **Manfred Weber** (DE), President of the EPP, underlined the importance of the European agriculture: "Our farmers deserve our respect and our gratitude – next to food security, they are the stewards of our landscapes and the guardians of biodiversity and a healthy environment".

## What's your preferred dairy product?

*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.*

**Manfred Weber**

**MEP (EPP, DE)**



*EPP President Manfred Weber with EDA secretary general Alexander Anton on 27 January 2024 in Bavaria*

## Traders in town

At Eucolait's January meeting in Brussels, dairy traders from all over Europe had the chance to catch up on recent market developments and to exchange with the wider dairy industry and with DG AGRI Director **Pierre Bascou**.



*L to R: CELCAA President Marcel van der Vliet, EDA Vice-President Albert de Groot, Eucolait President Frank van Stipdonk*

## Bauern in Brüssel

EDA had the pleasure of welcoming a delegation from Bauernverband Schleswig-Holstein on 24 January. The group of German farmers was visiting Brussels as guests of Member of the European Parliament **Niclas Herbst** (EPP, DE). EDA Director of Trade and Economics, **Laurens van Delft**, presented the recent work of our association and held a Q&A session with the delegation. The visit was concluded with a lively discussion with Dr. **Andreas Schneider**, the Deputy Head of the Cabinet of EU Commissioner for Agriculture **Janusz Wojciechowski**.

## Koryciński: new GI

The Polish cheese has been given the designation protected geographical indication by the EU Commission. Koryciński, also known as "Swojski", is a hard cheese made from cow's milk, named after the village of Korycin in Poland.

Ministry for Agriculture  
and Consumer Protection  
of the State of North Rhine-  
Westphalia



## MIV MILK SUMMIT 2024

Milk pricing in the value chain: regulation versus competition and market economy?

5 March 2024, Brussels

[Registrater for the event here](#)



## EDA Dairy Policy Conference

Focus on the European Elections 2024

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024, Brussels

Confirmed Speakers: Wolfgang Burtscher, Director-General,

DG AGRI, Albert de Groot, CEO, Vreugdenhil Dairy Foods

[www.euromilk.org/eda](http://www.euromilk.org/eda)



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## EDA Annual Convention



Rome, Italy

13th -th 15 November

Hosted by

Assolatte  
ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA  
LATTIERO CASEARIA