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Analysis of the latest and expected
developments around the European
Commission's policy around
sustainability, agriculture, and the
future of food

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Analysis of the latest and expected developments around the European Commission's policy around sustainability, agriculture, and the future of food

Details of the Deep Dive

Topic: N/A

Thematic area(s): Corporate matters; Food innovations & Biotechnologies; Pesticides; Animal health and welfare

Keyword(s): N/A

Query: ("latest action" OR "future action" OR "expected development" OR "Strategic Dialogue") AND policy AND ("sustainable agriculture" OR "sustainable farming" OR "future of food" OR "food future" OR "sustainable food system" OR "healthy food system" OR "inclusive food system") AND (EU OR Europe)

Timeframe: 2024

A. Deep dive general introduction

The European Commission's strategic initiatives on sustainability, agriculture, and the future of food represent a cornerstone in the transition towards a competitive, sustainable, and resilient EU food system. Building on frameworks such as the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy, these initiatives aim to address pressing challenges while leveraging opportunities across the agri-food value chain. The dialogue on the future of EU agriculture brings together Member States, industry stakeholders, NGOs, and academia to shape a shared vision for the Union's agri-food sector and to drive transformative change through policies that support sustainability, innovation, and equitable economic returns. This deep dive explores the policy context shaping these developments, focusing on: i) Analysing the key voices and opinions of stakeholders regarding the evolution of sustainability in food systems, identifying their perspectives, ambitions, and concerns; ii) Exploring how the new EC senior administration and the European Parliament are addressing sustainability in food systems, including whether this concept may shift towards other drivers that are more or less compatible with sustainability and iii) Assessing the potential impacts of the new policies being implemented, under different scenarios, on EFSA's core topics such as food safety, animal health, and plant health, ensuring alignment with policy developments and emerging challenges.

B. Distilled information

Not requested

C. Monitoring timelines

The time period covered by the following deepening is from 1 January 2024 to 20 December 2024.

D. Key actors and roles

Key stakeholder voices and opinions on the matter

Organization	Document title	Reference	Reason for inclusion
Agroecology Europe	Joint Press Release: Slow Food and Agroecology Europe on the Strategic Dialogue on the	URL	Agroecology Europe and Slow Food highlight the importance of collaborative dialogue in shaping the Strategic Dialogue's recommendations, which align with the EU's sustainability goals. Key insights include support for agroecological practices, sustainable farming, targeted Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reforms, and the promotion of sustainable diets and trade coherence. These aspects are

	Future of Agriculture and Food: For Greater Ambition		crucial for EFSA's interest in understanding stakeholder opinions, policy impacts, and alignment with Green Deal objectives.
Agroecology Europe	Open letter for climate action and just transition in agriculture	URL 1 URL 2	Agroecology Europe, alongside other civil society organisations, underscores the urgency of embedding climate action and a just transition into EU agricultural policies. Key recommendations include binding emission reduction targets, a strategy for sustainable animal farming, and the establishment of an Agri-Food Just Transition Fund. These align with the Strategic Dialogue's outcomes and are critical for EFSA's focus on policy impacts, stakeholder collaboration, and advancing sustainability in food systems.
CGIAR System Organization	International research symposium on agricultural greenhouse gas mitigation from research to implementation	URL	CGIAR's symposium on agricultural greenhouse gas mitigation showcases innovative approaches crucial for advancing climate-smart agriculture. Highlights include the KlimAF project on agroforestry systems, which evaluates carbon sequestration potential and emission reductions, and the AVoiD project, which develops hermetic storage solutions to reduce post-harvest losses and greenhouse gases. Other contributions include advanced soil organic carbon mapping from the KlimaFern project and modelling studies on nitrogen fertilisation and ley rotations using the RothC model to optimise soil carbon management. These projects offer practical insights for sustainable agricultural transitions and climate resilience.
Compassion in World Farming EU	Timelines for action missing from commissioners hearings	URL	Compassion in World Farming EU emphasises the urgent need for concrete timelines and actions to modernise animal welfare legislation, reflecting the consensus reached in the Strategic Dialogue. Key points include commitments to ban caged farming, reform live animal transport rules, and enhance fish welfare standards, which remain underrepresented. These developments are crucial for understanding stakeholder pressures, aligning policies with public demand, and assessing the broader impacts on sustainable food systems. The link to funding mechanisms like CAP and the Green Deal further ties this to the EU's sustainability transition.
Crop Life Europe (European Crop Protection Association (ECPA))	CropLife Europe statement on Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture	URL	CropLife Europe underscores the importance of a predictable, science-based regulatory framework and agricultural innovation in advancing the EU's competitiveness and sustainability goals. Their support for an outcome-based approach aligns with the Strategic Dialogue's emphasis on strengthening farmers' positions in the supply chain and ensuring fair incomes. This perspective highlights industry priorities, including access to advanced tools and innovations, making it relevant for understanding stakeholder dynamics and their influence on EU agricultural policies.
Crop Life Europe (European Crop Protection Association (ECPA))	"Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture in the European Union Consultation - CropLife Europe Submission"	URL	CropLife Europe's detailed recommendations and insights from the Strategic Dialogue highlight the importance of a science-based regulatory framework, investment in innovation, and enabling technologies to enhance sustainability and competitiveness in EU agriculture. Their focus on tools like biopesticides, digital agriculture, and New Genomic Techniques (NGTs), coupled with calls for global trade alignment and fair competition, provides a comprehensive view of industry priorities. These perspectives are crucial for understanding how EU policies can balance innovation, environmental goals, and global competitiveness.
DG Agri	Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture: A shared prospect for farming and food in Europe	URL 1 URL 2	The DG Agri report details the outcomes of the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture, chaired by Peter Strohschneider. This dialogue represents a landmark effort in shaping a shared vision for the future of European farming, food systems, and rural areas. Announced by the European Commission President in her 2023 State of the Union address and launched in January 2024, the initiative brought together 29 key stakeholders from across the agri-food chain, civil society, academia, and rural communities. This collaborative forum marked a new format of political discourse, emphasizing mutual understanding, compromise, and cooperation to address the profound challenges facing Europe's agri-food sector.

			The report emphasizes the urgency of action driven by the triple planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, compounded by geopolitical tensions and growing urban-rural divides. It underscores the strategic importance of food and agriculture not only for Europe's economic and social fabric but also for global food security and environmental stewardship. By navigating interdependencies and trade-offs, the dialogue developed a comprehensive set of recommendations that reflect economic, social, and environmental sustainability goals. Key outcomes of the dialogue include the articulation of guiding political principles and actionable strategies to transform agri-food systems. These principles highlight the need for immediate change, enhanced cooperation across the value chain, the integration of technological innovation, and the promotion of balanced diets. The report also calls for addressing the unique challenges faced by rural areas, empowering youth in agriculture, and fostering a competitive yet sustainable food system. Among the strategic recommendations, the dialogue advocates for reforming the CAP to better support farmers, incentivizing sustainability, and preventing farm abandonment. It also stresses the importance of financing the transition through both public and private investment, including the establishment of a Temporary Just Transition Fund. The report further highlights the need for trade policies that align sustainability with global competitiveness and calls for measures to ensure food systems operate within planetary boundaries, including reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and the promotion of agroecological practices. Central to the dialogue's vision is the establishment of a European Board on Agri-food (EBAF), a proposed platform to foster continued collaboration among agri-food stakeholders, civil society, and scientific experts. This governance shift reflects the dialogue's commitment to fostering a new culture of trust, cooperation, and inclusivity, essential for implementing the proposed transformative changes. In its conclusion, the DG Agri report serves as a blueprint for a resilient, sustainable, and competitive future for European agriculture and food systems. It calls upon European institutions, Member States, and stakeholders to translate its shared recommendations into decisive and bold actions, ensuring the agri-food sector's long-term viability and alignment with societal and environmental goals.
DG Agri	49. #EUAgriFoodDays: A promise to shape the future together	URL	The latest episode of The Food for Europe podcast highlights the EU Agri-Food Days, a major event organised by DG Agriculture and Rural Development, gathering key stakeholders to discuss the future of EU agriculture.
DG Agri		URL	The DG Agri report summarises the transformative progress of EU agriculture and rural development during the 2019-24 mandate, highlighting the CAP's evolution into a more sustainable, performance-based policy. Key initiatives include the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture, substantial support for organic farming, geographical indications, and sustainable farming practices. With €269.5 billion allocated to the CAP for 2023-27, 47% of the budget is climate-relevant, emphasising the EU's commitment to biodiversity, climate neutrality, and resilient food systems. These priorities directly inform EFSA's interests in understanding policy impacts on sustainability, innovation, and rural livelihoods.
EuroCommerce	Retail and wholesale in the agri-food supply chain	URL	EuroCommerce highlights the essential role of retail and wholesale sectors in the EU agri-food chain, focusing on their partnerships with farmers and manufacturers to transition towards sustainable practices. Their participation in the Strategic Dialogue underscores their commitment to reducing emissions, increasing biodiversity, and promoting sustainable consumption. Furthermore, their insights into the dynamics of the agri-food supply chain and calls for balanced regulation on unfair trading practices provide critical perspectives on

			market functioning and policy impacts, aligning with EFSA's interest in understanding stakeholder roles and economic influences in agri-food systems.
EuropaBio	Biotechnology in the framework of Europe's agri-food future	URL	EuropaBio underscores the transformative potential of biotechnology in the EU's agri-food future, highlighting its role in advancing sustainable practices, reducing farm emissions, and ensuring healthy animals through innovations like precision fermentation. The Strategic Dialogue's report reflects the complexity of achieving a sustainable, affordable, and healthy food system, where biotechnology serves as a cornerstone for resilience and competitiveness. EuropaBio emphasises that biotechnology is critical for building future-proof supply chains and maintaining Europe's role in competitive global trade while addressing sustainability and health objectives. Dr. Claire Skentelbery, Director General, commends the collaborative efforts that shaped the dialogue's outcomes, stressing the need for continued engagement to maximise biotech's contributions to Europe's agri-food systems.
European Commission	Strategic Dialogue on the future of EU agriculture	URL	The European Commission's Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture underscores the essential contributions of farmers to Europe's food security, rural vitality, and sustainability transition. Announced in September 2023 and launched in January 2024, the dialogue brought together 29 key stakeholders from across the agri-food chain, civil society, and academia to develop a shared vision for the future of farming and food systems. The final report, titled "A shared prospect for farming and food in Europe", presented to President Ursula von der Leyen in September 2024, identifies challenges such as climate change, demographic shifts, and market pressures, while proposing actionable recommendations to ensure a resilient and sustainable future. The dialogue complements the European Commission's existing efforts under the revamped CAP, which began in 2023 with a budget of €300 billion. The CAP supports farmers by incentivising sustainable practices, offering targeted assistance to smaller farms, and introducing measures to enhance resilience against natural disasters and economic shocks. For example, over €500 million in emergency support was provided to farmers in 2023 alone, and €4 billion annually is redirected to smaller farms. Farmers adopting carbon storage alongside their yield are further rewarded, reflecting the EU's commitment to integrating environmental stewardship into agricultural productivity. To address systemic challenges, the Commission has introduced initiatives to streamline administrative processes, reduce burdens on farmers, and strengthen their position within the food supply chain. Efforts to tackle unfair trading practices include dedicated surveys to collect feedback from farmers and smaller suppliers, enabling targeted policy adjustments. The Strategic Dialogue and these broader reforms collectively aim to create a more equitable, sustainable, and competitive agri-food system for Europe, ensuring that agriculture remains a vital pillar of rural development and European prosperity.
European Commission	The European Green Deal	URL	The European Green Deal places significant emphasis on supporting farmers in adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change while transitioning to sustainable practices. Key measures include financial assistance through the CAP, targeted aid during climate-related disasters, and incentives for adopting climate-smart practices like carbon storage. Farmers are further supported through flexibility in CAP funds, simplified regulations, and advanced tools for resilience, ensuring their role as essential contributors to Europe's green transition and food security. These initiatives highlight the critical support systems that enable farmers to thrive amidst environmental and economic challenges.
European Commission	Sustaining our quality of life: food security, water and nature	URL	The European Commission places farmers and agriculture at the heart of its vision for sustaining Europe's quality of life, recognising their critical role in providing secure, high-quality, and sustainable food. The Commission's upcoming Vision for Agriculture and Food will aim

			to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of the farming sector while safeguarding biodiversity and reducing bureaucratic burdens. Initiatives include targeted CAP support, incentives for nature-positive actions, and investments in innovation across the food value chain. Additionally, the Commission plans to strengthen farmers' positions within the agri-food value chain and support young farmers, ensuring a sustainable and prosperous agricultural future.
European Dairy Association	Dairy Focus 02/2024 Hungarian EU Presidency	URL	The European Dairy Association's Dairy Focus 02/2024 highlights the Hungarian EU Presidency's agricultural priorities, with a strong focus on supporting farmers and fostering a sustainable and competitive agricultural sector. Key initiatives include discussions on generational renewal, a farmer-friendly regulatory framework, and the role of subsidies and market mechanisms in the future CAP. Emphasis is also placed on crisis-proofing agriculture, sustainability efforts like food waste reduction and soil conservation, and promoting knowledge-based farming through research and innovation.
European Dairy Association	Annual Report 2023/2024	URL	The European Dairy Association's Annual Report 2023/2024 highlights the critical importance of supporting farmers and advancing sustainable agricultural practices within the dairy sector. The report emphasizes strengthening farmers' positions in the value chain through fairer income distribution, enhanced price transparency, and cooperative structures to reduce costs and improve efficiency. It underscores the urgency of addressing generational renewal by improving access to land and resources for young farmers while promoting farming as a viable and attractive profession. The sustainability transition remains central, with calls for environmentally friendly practices, reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and financial support for adopting innovative methods. The report also stresses the need for resilient infrastructure to mitigate risks from environmental and economic challenges, alongside streamlined regulatory frameworks to ease burdens on farmers while aligning with evolving sustainability goals. By investing in research and innovation, the dairy sector aims to enhance productivity and resilience, ensuring its long-term viability and competitiveness.
European Environmental Bureau	Reducing emissions from agriculture: reflection on the potential design and scope of an EU emissions trading system for agriculture	URL	The EEB's position paper emphasizes the urgent need to address agricultural emissions, highlighting the sector's dual role as a victim of and contributor to the climate crisis. The paper calls for a fundamental reform of the CAP to prioritize emissions reduction, support for agroecological transitions, and fair application of the Polluter Pays Principle. It also explores the potential of an Agricultural Emissions Trading System (Agri ETS) to incentivize sustainable practices while warning against intensification and "license to pollute" risks. These proposals are critical for empowering farmers to adopt environmentally friendly practices while maintaining resilience and competitiveness amidst evolving climate and policy challenges.
European Environmental Bureau	Today's rotten food systems, a misguided CAP and the road out of crisis	URL	The article underscores the critical need for systemic reform in EU agricultural policies, particularly the Common Agricultural Policy CAP, to better support farmers and ensure sustainable food systems. It highlights the disparity in CAP subsidies, where the majority of funds benefit large-scale industrial actors while smaller, more sustainable farmers struggle. The piece advocates for a shift toward agroecology, fair redistribution of resources, and preservation of environmental standards like Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC). These changes are framed as essential for addressing farmer grievances, bolstering food security, and fostering resilience against environmental and economic crises, aligning with broader goals of equity and ecological health.
European Environmental Bureau	"Greenlash": The truth behind the farmer protests	URL	The article highlights the systemic challenges faced by European farmers, emphasizing how the current agricultural policies, particularly under the CAP, disproportionately benefit large industrial actors at the expense of small and medium-sized farms. It criticizes the lack of support for transitioning to sustainable agroecological practices, which could reduce dependence on expensive synthetic

			inputs and improve farmer livelihoods. The piece underscores the environmental degradation caused by intensive farming and calls for urgent reforms to align agricultural systems with social, economic, and environmental sustainability, advocating for policies that genuinely support farmers' resilience and the health of ecosystems critical to food production.
FruCom	Report of the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture – recommends new approach on sustainability, improved coherence with trade	URL	FruCom comments on the the Strategic Dialogue and outlines a comprehensive vision for addressing the economic, social, and environmental challenges faced by the EU's agriculture sector. It prioritizes strengthening farmers' positions in the value chain, deploying sustainable farming practices, and aligning trade policies with environmental and labour standards. The recommendations also emphasize financing the transition to sustainability, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and improving access to knowledge and innovation. These proposals aim to create a resilient, competitive, and equitable agricultural system that supports farmers while maintaining coherence with the EU Green Deal and global trade dynamics.
EPHA	Letter calls for health civil society to contribute to the ECs vision for agriculture and food	URL	The EPHA's call for integrating health perspectives into the EU's agricultural and food policy discussions highlights the critical intersection of public health and food systems. The letter emphasizes the urgent need for preventative policies to address unhealthy diets, antimicrobial resistance driven by excessive antibiotic use in animal farming, and the rising burden of diet-related non-communicable diseases, which cost the EU €700 billion annually in healthcare. By advocating for systemic changes, such as healthier food environments and market incentives for sustainable products, the health sector seeks to play a vital role in shaping policies that align with public health, environmental sustainability, and economic resilience.
EuroSeeds	European Commission President von der Leyen launches strategic dialogue on agriculture	URL	Euroseeds highlights the critical role of the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture in fostering inclusive conversations to address challenges like food security, sustainability, and competitiveness. The initiative aims to unify stakeholders, including the seed and plant breeding sectors, in shaping resilient agricultural policies. Euroseeds underscores the relevance of the dialogue for discussions on critical topics like the CAP, financial frameworks, and legislation on New Genomic Techniques (NGTs) and Plant Reproductive Material (PRM). These areas are key for leveraging technology and sustainable practices to ensure farmers' livelihoods and enhance the sector's global competitiveness.
BMEL and ZKEL	The future of agriculture. A common agenda in difficult times - Strategic guidelines and recommendations of the Commission on the Future of Agriculture	URL	The BMEL and ZKL report highlights the urgent need for systemic reform in European agriculture to create a more sustainable, resilient, and competitive sector. It advocates for a transformative approach to the CAP, emphasizing the need to incentivize ecosystem services, enhance farmers' market positions, and adopt innovative governance mechanisms such as sustainability benchmarking to ensure measurable progress in environmental, social, and economic outcomes. The report underscores the importance of improving access to land for young farmers and fostering generational renewal, recognizing these as critical to sustaining the agricultural workforce and revitalizing rural areas. Additionally, it emphasizes biodiversity conservation through targeted agri-environmental measures, crop diversification to increase climate resilience, and the strengthening of regional value chains to support local economies. By proposing streamlined regulations, better coordination of public funding, and investment in innovation and digitization, the report aims to empower farmers while balancing environmental stewardship with economic viability, ensuring that agriculture remains a cornerstone of European sustainability and food security.
FAO	EU-FAO leverage partnership towards more efficient, inclusive,	URL	The EU-FAO partnership underscores the critical role of collaboration in transforming global agrifood systems to make them more efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable. This partnership, marked by significant EU funding and support, prioritizes areas such as food systems transformation, climate change adaptation, biodiversity

	resilient and sustainable agrifood systems		conservation, and building resilient livelihoods. Specific projects, like rural entrepreneurship initiatives in Papua New Guinea and sustainable wildlife management in African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries, illustrate how joint efforts directly benefit farmers and rural communities. By integrating climate action, innovative financing, and value chain development, the partnership exemplifies how targeted investments and international cooperation can address pressing challenges faced by farmers worldwide, aligning with broader goals of sustainability and food security.
Greenpeace	Support farmers in need and reward nature protection, says major EU farming review	URL	Greenpeace highlights the critical need for reforming EU agricultural policies to prioritize vulnerable farmers and reward those contributing to nature protection. The Strategic Dialogue's recommendations, supported by a broad coalition of stakeholders, advocate for transitioning away from subsidies favouring large landowners and industrial-scale farming, instead channelling support towards sustainable practices and biodiversity restoration. Key proposals include increasing CAP subsidies for eco-friendly farming, reducing the environmental impact of livestock farming, and establishing a dedicated nature restoration fund. These reforms aim to address climate, health, and ecological challenges while supporting farmers' livelihoods and fostering a sustainable agri-food system in Europe.
International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association	Activity Report of the Executive Director	URL	The IBMA Activity Report highlights the organization's ongoing efforts to support farmers by promoting the adoption of biocontrol solutions as an essential tool for sustainable agriculture. Through advocacy for proportionate regulations, fast-track authorizations, and improved market access, IBMA seeks to enhance the availability of biocontrol products that help farmers reduce dependency on synthetic pesticides while improving crop resilience and environmental outcomes. Collaborations with farmer associations, demonstrations of biocontrol efficacy, and regulatory input emphasize IBMA's role in aligning agricultural practices with EU sustainability goals, ultimately empowering farmers to adopt innovative and eco-friendly approaches.
International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies	Sustainable food systems. Change of route in the Mediterranean.	URL	The CIHEAM document focuses on transforming Mediterranean food systems to address sustainability, resilience, and equity. It highlights the need to improve farmers' livelihoods and rural community integration through targeted policies, financial aid, and capacity building. Sustainable practices, such as climate-smart and regenerative agriculture, are emphasized to align farming with ecological limits and protect natural resources. The report also stresses the importance of leveraging knowledge and innovation, advocating for investments in education, research, and technology to empower local stakeholders and enhance resource efficiency. A thriving future for Mediterranean food systems is envisioned by promoting the Mediterranean Diet, fostering urban-rural linkages, and reducing food waste. Collaboration among stakeholders is deemed essential to creating inclusive, competitive agri-food systems that balance economic growth, environmental preservation, and societal well-being.
IFOAM-EU	Strategic Dialogue – Organic is a leading choice for transitioning to sustainable agri-food systems	URL	IFOAM Organics Europe underscores the pivotal role of organic farming as a legally regulated and proven model for achieving sustainable agri-food systems. Through its participation in the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture, IFOAM contributed to key recommendations that advocate reforming the CAP to reward organic farmers for their contributions to biodiversity, climate action, and rural development. The report emphasizes expanding funding for organic farming, balancing supply and demand through public procurement and market promotion, reducing administrative burdens, and enhancing education and advisory services for organic practices. These measures align with the goal of reconciling nature protection with farmers' livelihoods, making organic farming a cornerstone for sustainability and resilience in the EU's food system.

IFOAM-EU	Organics Europe to EU: Seize the moment for a sustainable agri-food future	URL	IFOAM Organics Europe's recommendations for the EU's Vision for Agriculture and Food emphasize the transformative potential of organic farming in achieving a sustainable, resilient, and competitive agri-food system. Aligning with the Strategic Dialogue's conclusions, IFOAM advocates for moving beyond hectare-based CAP payments to systems that reward farmers for providing ecosystem services, promoting sustainable public procurement, and integrating a holistic, whole-farm benchmarking approach. The organization highlights the scalability of organic innovations, noting their applicability to conventional farming as tools for reducing synthetic input dependence. By supporting these measures, IFOAM aims to strengthen environmental, social, and economic progress in the EU agriculture sector, ensuring a broad, inclusive benefit to farmers and society alike.
IFOAM-EU	Future CAP needs reform to deliver on the future of food and farming	URL	IFOAM Organics Europe underscores the urgent need for reforming the CAP to align with the EU's environmental and sustainability goals, as outlined in the Strategic Dialogue on the future of EU agriculture. The organization advocates for a CAP that supports all farmers in transitioning to sustainable practices using a whole-farm approach while adequately rewarding those engaged in systems like organic farming for their contributions to environmental and societal well-being. Emphasizing agriculture's central role in the European way of life, IFOAM calls for collective action to address current challenges, ensuring the sector's competitiveness and resilience through agroecological transitions that benefit farmers, nature, and society.
IFOAM-EU	CAP and rural development: Supporting Europe's farmers and developing rural communities	URL	IFOAM Organics Europe advocates for a reformed CAP that aligns with the EU's environmental and social goals while fostering sustainable agri-food systems. The organization emphasizes that the CAP must support farmers transitioning to sustainable practices and reward those delivering public goods such as biodiversity preservation, water quality improvement, and climate action. Organic farming is positioned as a cornerstone of sustainability, given its regulated framework and ability to deliver ecosystem services while enhancing rural economies. IFOAM supports a shift in CAP funding to incentivize whole-farm sustainable approaches rather than area-based subsidies, proposing a dual funding structure. One line should provide socio-economic support targeted at farmers in need, while the second remunerates contributions to ecosystem services through proportional environmental incentives. Complementary to CAP reforms, IFOAM stresses the importance of fostering organic farming networks, enhancing advisory services, and promoting digital technologies and generational renewal in rural areas. The promotion of bio-districts is highlighted as a model for revitalizing rural areas by fostering collaborations among farmers, consumers, local authorities, and businesses. Bio-districts drive environmental sustainability, boost local economies, and enhance social cohesion by integrating organic agriculture with local traditions and circular economy principles. IFOAM also calls for integrating organic farming objectives in CAP Strategic Plans, urging member states to set ambitious targets to achieve the EU's 25% organic land goal by 2030. Adequate payment rates, compatibility between eco-schemes and agri-environmental measures, and support for market development and demand for organic products are essential for reaching this target. Through these measures, IFOAM envisions a CAP that empowers farmers, ensures fairer resource distribution, and positions sustainable agriculture at the heart of Europe's rural development.
ILSI	Celebrating the success of ILSI Europe Annual Symposium 2024	URL	The ILSI Europe Annual Symposium 2024 highlights the intersection of food, health, and sustainability, with a strong focus on empowering farmers, advancing sustainable agriculture, and fostering resilience in food systems. Key discussions revolved around leveraging technology, such as AI and precision fermentation, to improve production efficiency and reduce waste. The event also addressed critical topics like soil health, circular economies, and bio-based solutions, which directly impact sustainable farming practices.

			Panellists emphasized aligning food safety with societal expectations and fostering holistic approaches to sustainable diets that benefit both human and planetary health. These insights align with the broader vision of shaping competitive, inclusive, and resilient agri-food systems.
Ministry of Regional Affairs and Agriculture – Estonia	Future prospects for food and agriculture policy in the EU Contribution to conference 'Is the future of food production bright?'	URL	Professor Alan Matthews emphasized the need for targeted reforms in EU agricultural policy to address income disparities, environmental impacts, and productivity gaps. He advocated for shifting CAP payments from area-based subsidies to performance-based incentives linked to environmental and societal goals. Highlighting innovation and digitalization as critical, he stressed supporting generational renewal and fair-trading conditions to strengthen farmers' roles in the value chain. Matthews also called for urgent action on emissions reduction in agriculture, particularly in livestock, while promoting sustainable practices and alternative proteins to balance environmental and economic priorities.
Primary Food Processors		URL	The Primary Food Processors highlight the critical role of their sectors in transforming agricultural raw materials into food, feed, and bio-based products, calling for supportive policies to ensure sustainability and resilience. As energy-intensive industries, they emphasize the need for access to decarbonization funding, expanded renewable energy infrastructure in rural areas, and policies enabling the use of biomass for energy. PFP advocates for an incentive-based framework to reduce farm-level (scope 3) emissions, urging a balanced approach to carbon removal and agricultural ETS to avoid burdening farmers and processors. The organization underscores the importance of an enabling trade and food policy environment to promote sustainable food systems. They support farmer resilience through tools like carbon farming, precision agriculture, and access to non-chemical alternatives to pesticides. PFP also champions rapid progress on NGTs legislation to enhance EU agricultural competitiveness and secure a level playing field in trade. They call for cooperation with third countries to align sustainability standards and avoid indirect impacts like leakage. These priorities reflect PFP's commitment to building a sustainable, competitive, and secure agri-food system.
spiritsEUROPE	Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture in the EU: spiritsEUROPE's submission to the Stakeholder Consultation 5 April 2024	URL	spiritsEUROPE emphasizes the importance of fostering competitive and sustainable agricultural systems to support farmers and rural communities. The organization highlights the role of long-term partnerships between the spirits industry and farmers in securing reliable, high-quality raw materials while promoting biodiversity, soil health, and sustainable farming practices. They advocate for CAP reforms that provide fair income for farmers, encourage innovation, and address infrastructural deficits in rural areas to enhance quality of life and attract diverse communities. In addressing agriculture within planetary boundaries, spiritsEUROPE stresses the efficiency of their production processes and calls for regional sustainability roadmaps to tailor best practices across diverse European ecosystems. They underline the need for coherent policies to promote circular economies, sustainable nutrient flows, and biodiversity. To leverage innovation, spiritsEUROPE advocates for enabling policy frameworks and public-private partnerships that support research into regenerative agriculture, carbon farming, and climate-resilient crops, ensuring scalable and inclusive advancements in sustainable practices. For a thriving future, spiritsEUROPE underscores the necessity of open trade policies, free trade agreements, and trade diplomacy to expand market opportunities and ensure competitiveness. They call for EU initiatives to protect agri-food exports and align international sustainability standards, supporting the global reputation of European food and drink products as drivers of rural economic growth and farmer resilience.
BEUC	EU Strategic Dialogue on the future of agriculture	URL	BEUC supports the outcomes of the EU Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture, calling it a significant step toward making healthy and sustainable food choices accessible for all consumers. The report emphasizes fostering plant-rich diets, enhancing food labelling

	delivers promising results for consumers		and marketing to guide informed choices, and using public procurement to prioritize sustainable and high-welfare food systems. BEUC highlights the need for fiscal policies, like VAT reductions on sustainable foods, and targeted social support to ensure affordability and inclusivity in the food transition. On the CAP, BEUC welcomes the shift away from area-based payments to targeted income support for farmers practicing sustainable methods, advocating for better value for taxpayers. While BEUC calls for bolder actions on animal welfare and ensuring imported foods meet EU standards, it praises the consensus-driven, balanced vision of the dialogue. The organization urges EU leadership to translate these recommendations into concrete actions, ensuring consumers, farmers, and the environment benefit from a cohesive, sustainable food system.
OECD	Agricultural Policy Monitoring and Evaluation 2024	URL	The OECD document emphasizes the need to support farmers and rural communities by ensuring fair living standards, investing in infrastructure, and fostering education and skill development tailored to modern agricultural demands. It highlights the importance of aligning agriculture with planetary boundaries through sustainable practices such as precision farming and crop rotation, supported by robust policy frameworks and environmental incentives. Leveraging knowledge and technological innovation is deemed essential, with investments in R&D, digital tools, and public-private partnerships driving efficiency and resilience. To secure a competitive future for Europe's food system, the document advocates for balanced market access, innovation incentives, and strengthening food system resilience through advanced technology and robust supply chains. Collaborative governance and targeted investments are presented as key to achieving a sustainable, thriving agri-food sector that supports farmers and rural communities while addressing environmental and economic challenges.
OECD	Mission-Oriented Innovation Policies for Net Zero	URL	The OECD report on Mission-Oriented Innovation Policies (MOIPs) for achieving net-zero targets highlights the transformative potential of this approach while addressing its current limitations. MOIPs encourage collaboration among diverse stakeholders to set ambitious goals for emissions reduction and sustainability. However, the report emphasizes that many missions lack measurable targets, effective portfolio management, and comprehensive funding mechanisms. To succeed, missions must extend their focus beyond technological innovation, set clear agendas to drive behavioural change, and engage private sector resources to complement public funding. The report advocates for stable, multiannual funding, innovative financing models, and strategic flexibility to overcome challenges such as fragmented budgets and restrictive bureaucratic rules. High-level political support and well-resourced management teams are deemed essential for scaling and deploying solutions effectively. By integrating policies beyond traditional science, technology, and innovation realms, and fostering stronger public-private collaboration, the next generation of MOIPs can achieve systemic change and fulfil their potential to transform agriculture and food systems within planetary boundaries while enhancing economic and social sustainability.
OECD	Effective Results Frameworks for Sustainable Development	URL	The OECD document "Effective Results Frameworks for Sustainable Development: Achieving Impact by Design" emphasizes creating robust, adaptable, and results-driven frameworks to support sustainable development initiatives. It advocates for aligning agricultural and rural development practices with sustainable principles by integrating economic, environmental, and social dimensions into policy planning and execution. This approach includes fostering knowledge-sharing, stakeholder collaboration, and innovation while ensuring rural and agricultural sustainability through measurable outcomes. The frameworks focus on building inclusive participation, monitoring progress with quantitative and qualitative methods, and leveraging digital tools for data collection and evaluation. The goal is to harmonize efforts across governments

			and development agencies, prioritize locally led initiatives, and align strategies with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to create resilient food systems and rural economies that thrive within planetary boundaries.
USDA	"EU Strategic Dialogue Charts a Course for the Future of EU Agriculture"	URL	USDA reported on the EU Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture outlining a forward-looking roadmap aimed at creating economically profitable, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible agricultural systems. Key recommendations focus on strengthening farmers' roles in the value chain, improving sustainability practices, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and fostering innovation to enhance competitiveness. The dialogue also emphasizes fair incomes for farmers, generational renewal, and aligning food production with high environmental and animal welfare standards. The report calls for bold actions, such as reforming the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to better target income support, rewarding sustainable practices, and adopting innovative agricultural technologies. It underscores the importance of knowledge-sharing, partnerships, and trade policies that uphold EU standards while ensuring competitiveness in global markets. This inclusive process, involving 29 key stakeholders from across the food chain, highlights the potential for shared goals to address systemic challenges, offering a comprehensive vision for the EU's agricultural future.
WOAH	Key Certainties and Uncertainties in Animal Health and Welfare	URL	The World Organisation for Animal Health's foresight project reflects on key changes influencing animal health and welfare and explores how to navigate these shifts to secure a sustainable future for agriculture and food systems. Highlighting challenges like climate change, resource competition, antimicrobial resistance, and technological advancements, the study urges adaptive strategies to promote resilience among farmers and rural communities. It underscores the need for policies that ensure a fair standard of living for farmers while integrating ecological boundaries into agricultural practices. The use of innovative technologies such as AI, genetic engineering, and synthetic biology is proposed to boost productivity and sustainability. Additionally, fostering societal shifts toward valuing animal welfare and sustainability is deemed crucial for a competitive and thriving agri-food system in Europe and beyond.

How the new EC senior administration and the European Parliament intend to address the subject of Sustainability in Food Systems

The European Commission's senior administration and the European Parliament are addressing sustainability in food systems through several strategic frameworks, notably the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture and the revamped CAP.

- The Strategic Dialogue, launched in January 2024 and chaired by Peter Strohschneider, brought together 29 key stakeholders from across the agri-food chain, civil society, and academia to craft a shared vision for European agriculture and food systems. It emphasized the urgency of responding to climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution while promoting balanced diets, fostering rural vitality, and leveraging technological innovation to align agriculture with planetary boundaries [URL](#), [URL](#), [URL](#). The final report called for actionable strategies such as reforming the CAP to better support sustainable farming practices, empowering smaller farms, and establishing a Temporary Just Transition Fund to finance the transition [URL](#), [URL](#).
- The CAP itself, as part of the broader Green Deal initiatives, is evolving into a performance-based, climate-conscious policy with a €300 billion budget for 2023–27. Approximately 47% of the budget is now dedicated to climate-relevant activities, including rewarding farmers for carbon storage alongside yields and targeting €4 billion annually to small farms. These efforts aim to integrate environmental stewardship into agricultural productivity while addressing systemic challenges such as bureaucratic burdens and unfair trading practices [URL](#), [URL](#), [URL](#).
- Additionally, the European Commission plans to bolster farmers' resilience through investments in innovation and incentives for nature-positive actions. Upcoming initiatives like the Vision for Agriculture and Food focus on enhancing competitiveness, fostering rural sustainability, and supporting young farmers to secure the sector's future [URL](#).

These combined measures demonstrate a strong commitment to embedding sustainability within EU food systems while ensuring that farmers are supported as essential contributors to Europe's economic and environmental goals. However, the approach leaves open the possibility for the concept of sustainability to shift or expand, potentially accommodating broader drivers that reflect emerging societal, technological, or economic priorities [URL](#), [URL](#), [URL](#), [URL](#).

Expected impact of the new policies being unrolled with regards to the core topics for EFSA

The new EU policies arising from the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture and related initiatives have significant implications across EFSA's thematic areas, demonstrating an integrated approach to sustainability, innovation, and public health.

- For **animal health** and **animal welfare**, recommendations such as banning caged farming, enhancing fish welfare, and reducing antimicrobial resistance by cutting antibiotic use in agriculture align with EFSA's objectives to ensure higher welfare standards and mitigate health risks in intensive farming systems.
- **Biological hazards** and **chemical contaminants** are targeted through reductions in pesticide use, the adoption of biocontrol solutions, and enhanced monitoring of agricultural inputs, which resonate with EFSA's commitment to safeguarding food safety and minimizing exposure to harmful substances.
- **Nutrition and feed** additives benefit from policies encouraging plant-based diets and sustainable alternatives, contributing to healthier food systems and environmental sustainability.
- **Novel foods** gain prominence with the focus on precision fermentation and other biotechnologies, which present innovative solutions to sustainability challenges while necessitating EFSA's vigilance in ensuring their safety and integration into regulatory frameworks. Similarly, the emphasis on food innovations and biotechnologies, including New Genomic Techniques (NGTs), demonstrates a commitment to aligning agricultural advancements with safety and efficacy standards.
- For **environmental risk assessment** (ERA) and **pesticides**, the policies advocate for agroecology, carbon farming, and precision agriculture to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, enhance biodiversity, and operate within planetary boundaries, aligning closely with EFSA's role in evaluating ecological impacts. Plant health initiatives, such as crop diversification and soil conservation, further strengthen resilience against pests and climate change, core concerns for EFSA.
- **Data** and **corporate matters** are pivotal in these policies, with AI and digital tools emphasized for optimizing agricultural monitoring and sustainability benchmarks. Enhanced data collection and analysis capabilities support EFSA's scientific assessments, while governance shifts, including collaborative platforms like the proposed European Board on Agri-food (EBAF), reflect a renewed focus on inclusivity, transparency, and evidence-based policymaking.
- Finally, in **preparedness and foresight**, policies addressing generational renewal, trade resilience, and innovation incentives underscore a comprehensive strategy to fortify the EU's food systems.

Together, these frameworks empower EFSA to uphold its mission of supporting science-based regulation, ensuring food and feed safety, and advancing sustainable agricultural practices.

E. Key insights and recommendations

The European Commission and Parliament are advancing sustainability in food systems through strategic frameworks such as the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture and CAP reforms. These initiatives emphasize sustainability, innovation, and resilience across the agri-food chain, directly impacting EFSA's thematic areas.

- **Animal Health and Welfare:** Policies target enhanced welfare standards, reduced antimicrobial resistance, and bans on caged farming.
- **Biological Hazards and Chemical Contaminants:** Focus on reducing pesticide use, adopting biocontrol solutions, and monitoring agricultural inputs to safeguard food safety.
- **Novel Foods and Biotechnologies:** Innovations in precision fermentation and New Genomic Techniques (NGTs) require integration into safety and regulatory frameworks.
- **Environmental Risk Assessment** (ERA) and **Pesticides:** Agroecology, carbon farming, and precision agriculture mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and enhance biodiversity.
- **Plant Health:** Initiatives like crop diversification and soil conservation strengthen resilience against climate change and pests.

- **Data and Corporate Matters:** Emphasis on AI and digital tools for improved monitoring and evidence-based policymaking.
- **Preparedness and Foresight:** Policies support generational renewal, trade resilience, and innovation incentives for a sustainable food system.

These measures align with EFSA's role in ensuring food safety, fostering sustainable agriculture, and advancing science-based regulation.

F. Concise summary

The European Commission and Parliament are making significant advancements in sustainability within food systems through initiatives such as the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture and reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). These efforts aim to integrate sustainability, innovation, and resilience throughout the agri-food chain, with a direct impact on EFSA's key thematic areas. Policy developments include stronger animal welfare standards, such as bans on caged farming and measures to reduce antimicrobial resistance by cutting antibiotic use in agriculture. Efforts to reduce pesticide use and promote the adoption of biocontrol solutions support safer agricultural practices while safeguarding food safety and minimizing chemical contaminants. Additionally, the increasing prominence of novel food technologies, such as precision fermentation and New Genomic Techniques (NGTs), highlights the need for robust regulatory frameworks to ensure their safe integration into the food system. Environmental sustainability is also prioritized through the promotion of agroecology, carbon farming, and precision agriculture to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance biodiversity, and align with planetary boundaries. Initiatives to diversify crops and conserve soil further bolster plant health and climate resilience, addressing critical agricultural vulnerabilities. Meanwhile, advancements in data collection and analysis, driven by AI and digital tools, improve agricultural monitoring, transparency, and evidence-based policymaking. Finally, a focus on generational renewal, trade resilience, and innovation incentives strengthens the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of the EU food system. These comprehensive measures are closely aligned with EFSA's mission to ensure food and feed safety, promote sustainable agricultural practices, and support science-based regulation.