

*Contribution to the consultation on the EU agricultural and food promotion policy by the Good Food Institute Europe, June 2021.*

## **The EU's agricultural and food promotion policy must be in line with the EU's sustainability ambitions.**

The Good Food Institute Europe welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed review of the EU's agricultural and food promotion policy scheme.

We particularly appreciate the European Commission's recognition of the opportunity to align the promotion policy scheme in ways which "better support overarching EU policy objectives", including the Green New Deal and Farm to Fork Strategies. Likewise, we applaud the Commission for identifying that this policy should support wider efforts "to position the EU food system as a global reference for sustainability".

As the Commission has acknowledged in the Farm to Fork Strategy<sup>1</sup>, a societal shift towards a more plant-based diet is a key part of reducing the environmental impact of our food system. Plant-based products allow people to keep eating familiar foods – but with a drastically reduced environmental impact, decreased risk of zoonotic disease, and with no need for antibiotics. Making meat from plants has a key role to play in making our food system more sustainable, healthy and just, in line with the goals of the Farm to Fork Strategy.

To this end, it is positive to see that consumers are leading the way in this shift. Demand for plant-based food has soared over the last decade in Europe. The European plant-based meat and dairy sectors have experienced double digit growth year on year, and growth is expected to nearly double again over the next five years.<sup>2</sup> However, these options still make up a small percentage of the total meat and dairy markets (roughly 1% and 2.5% respectively).<sup>3</sup> In order to meet the Farm to Fork goals, the EU should incentivise further growth in this field.

The shift we have seen to date has in large part been driven by Europeans becoming increasingly conscious of the impact of their diets, with growing numbers actively seeking to reduce their consumption of animal products.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> [Farm to Fork Strategy and Action Plan](#), European Commission 2020, p14

<sup>2</sup> ING: [Growth of plant-based meat and dairy is stirring up the European food industry](#), October 2020

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> [One bite at a time, consumers and the transition to sustainable food](#), BEUC, 2020, p14



This shift has also been driven by advancements which have greatly improved the plant-based offerings available to Europeans. Until recently, plant-based meat and dairy had often been simplistic offerings such as tofu and black bean burgers that did not replicate the flavour, texture and overall experience of eating animal-based products. Advancements in food innovation have resulted in a new capability to break down meat into its component parts – proteins, fats, minerals – and replicate those qualities using plant-based ingredients.

This approach has demonstrated that it can provide Europeans with options to satisfy their demand for meat and dairy, without the significant external costs associated with conventional animal agriculture.

As such, this next generation of plant-based meat is reaching new people, and is facilitating the shift towards more plant-based diets. Research shows that, globally, 90% of plant-based meat consumers are not vegetarian or vegan. According to European market research, 83% of self-proclaimed ‘meat reducers’ consume plant-based meat.<sup>5</sup>

In order to further leverage these positive trends and bring the promotion policy in line with the EU’s overarching policy goals, the EU should incentivise further growth in this field. We call on the EU to:

- **Widen the scope of eligible products listed under Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 1114/2014 to include plant-based meat, egg and dairy products.** As described above, plant-based meat and dairy products can provide Europeans with the familiar foods they love, but produced at a fraction of the external environmental and health costs. These options therefore have a key role to play in facilitating the consumer journey towards more plant-based diets, thereby making our food system more sustainable, healthy and just. Currently, only a few plant-based food products (vegetable oils, certain kinds of jam, and fruit juice) qualify for funding under the promotion policy. The scope of the scheme should be broadened to take into account the range of sustainable protein options currently available on the European market. It should explicitly include plant-based meat, egg and dairy products, as well as foods made from fungi, microbes, and algae.
- **Adopt a policy to proactively encourage plant-based food production and diets in a wider sense,** in line with the Commission’s ambition to incentivise better sustainability and quality of agri-food products.

---

<sup>5</sup> [European Consumer Survey on Plant-Based Food](#), ProVeg Intl, 2020, p26



Thank you for considering this submission. For further information or a more detailed discussion of the points raised, please do not hesitate to reach out to Elena Walden, Policy Manager at the Good Food Institute Europe, at [elenaw@gfi.org](mailto:elenaw@gfi.org). Thank you!

*The Good Food Institute Europe is an international NGO helping to build a more sustainable, secure and just food system by transforming meat production. We work with scientists, businesses and policymakers to advance plant-based and cultivated meat, eggs, dairy and seafood – making them delicious, affordable and accessible across Europe. By making meat from plants and cultivating it from cells, we can reduce the environmental impact of our food system, decrease the risk of zoonotic disease, and feed more people with fewer resources. GFI Europe is powered by philanthropy.*