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PRESS RELEASE

What does it take for farmers to be 'Green Deal ready'?

Today's Green Deal presentation by Commissioner Frans Timmermans highlighted the key role that the European farming community will have to play in realising the Commission's new vision. Farmers and cooperatives are ready to deliver and support an ambitious vision provided that the Green Deal is coherent and consistent. Nonetheless, it cannot be overlooked that thousands of farmers have taken to the streets over the past few weeks in various countries calling for coherent policies, decent income and the end to the unfair depiction of the agricultural sector. These concerns must be addressed. However, at this stage the European Green Deal raises more questions among European farmers than it solves.

Having a vision for Europe on climate change is mandatory but it should be a concrete and realistic project so as "to leave no one behind". While we could support an ambitious approach, such as the one proposed in the Green Deal, farmers and their cooperatives need to know:

- how the European budget (MFF), with its planned cuts, will factor in the ambitions of the Green Deal in general and more specifically those of the new CAP and *Farm to Fork Strategy*;
- how the Commission will avoid any further delay to the CAP reform if it has to "reflect the ambitions of the Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy";
- how the ambition of the Green Deal and *Farm to Fork Strategy* will be mirrored in the CAP Strategic Plans from the outset if we do not even know what the approval criteria are;
- how farmers will be rewarded through eco-schemes if they only face incurred costs and income foregone;
- how "the Farm to Fork strategy proposal to improve the position of farmers in the value chain" will go beyond the already approved Directive on UTPs;
- whether "new technologies and scientific discoveries", would include New Breeding Techniques, which are currently blocked by the European Court of Justice's decision;
- whether the "Green Deal Diplomacy" will be used retroactively for the FTAs that support "harmful practices such as illegal logging", for example the Mercosur agreement;
- how the Commission will make the uptake of "digital technologies", which play a central role in the Green Deal, happen if only 50% of European rural areas have broadband coverage;
- how we are going to "significantly reduce the use of pesticides and fertilisers" when there is no mention of a list of "credible alternatives" in the Green Deal;
- what the financial impact of the Green Deal will be at a time when European agriculture is facing the challenge of generational renewal;

Agriculture is an essential partner of all the landmark policies that feature in the Green Deal. European farmers and their cooperatives will actively contribute to the "broad stakeholder debate" that was announced in the *Farm to Fork Strategy*. The success of the Green Deal will partly depend on the success and the preservation of the family farming model in Europe. No other sector can

remove emissions from the atmosphere naturally, while at the same time being the basis of the development of a bio-based economy and guaranteeing food security.

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