

Press release

Creation of the European Coordination Via Campesina

A new organisation to change the European agricultural policies as of the health check

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A new organisation to change the European agricultural policies

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The process initiated by the European Farmers' Coordination (CPE) and COAG has culminated on June 27th with the public presentation of the European Coordination Via Campesina in the presence of Josep Puxeu, the Spanish Secretary of State of rural environment and water.

The European Coordination Via Campesina regroups the organisations formerly gathered in the CPE and many rural and agricultural workers' organisations of Denmark, Switzerland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Greece, Malte and Turkey.

The main aim of this organization is the struggle for other food and agricultural policies based on more legitimacy, fairness, solidarity and sustainability wich are necessary in Europe to ensure food security, food safety, public health, employment in rural areas and to tackle the issues of the global food price crisis and climate change.

In Europe, each day, over thousand farms disappear because of a lack of real political will to make sustainable family agriculture thrive.

We demand the development of diverse, sustainable family farming attached to the territories and the application of food sovereignty.

In 2008, the European Coordination Via Campesina will participate actively in the European Social Forum in Malmö in Sweden (17-21 sept), the mobilisation and forum of Annecy in France at the occasion of the informal meeting of the Agricultural Council (20-23 sept) and the Vth Conference of Via Campesina (17-23 oct). She will involve itself actively in the debate on the CAP after 2013.

You will find underneath a presentation of the values and priorities of the European Coordination Via Campesina as well as the list of its member organisations and its Coordinating Committee.

Common base

We, member organisations of the European Coordination Via Campesina want to reinforce the European farmers movement to get the European agriculture policy changed. We defend the right of food sovereignty, necessary for this change. The common base here under resumes our values and our priorities. We invite the farmers and rural organisations who share this common base to join us to get the CAP changed already in 2008.

What are our values ?

Solidarity, instead of competition,

- social justice,
- equality of rights between men and women,
- sustainable use of the natural resources,
- producers and consumers health,
- regional diversity of products and of agri-cultures.

Why do we want to change the present agriculture policies in Europe ?

The present CAP, as a result from a bad CAP before 1992, badly reformed in 1992, 1999 and 2003 according to the WTO criteria, is removing the European farmers, is legitimate neither on the international nor on social levels, and ruins the environment, the health, the quality of products and makes farmers assisted people without economic and social recognition. Farmers from the Central and Eastern Europe countries which joined the EU are financially discriminated. The European countries outside the EU which signed the WTO agreement are following agriculture policies parallel to the CAP.

Our priorities for a fair, sustainable and legitimate agriculture policy

- We need a public policy, an European agriculture policy defined by the Europeans, not by the WTO.
- Yes to a change of CAP, no to its removal.
- Priority should be given to agricultural and rural employment. We say no to farmer's disappearance.
- The rights of women farmers should be recognised.
- Access to land, water, seeds, and credit should become a right: That includes the farmer's rights to save their seeds and to improve plant varieties.
- The setting up of young farmers has to be promoted.
- Farmers' income should come first from selling their products. For farm prices reflecting the real value of the products, the two following conditions: are necessary:

Supply management instruments should be implemented, to avoid surpluses or shortages.

Any dumping at export (at prices below the production costs) must be forbidden, and in exchange for this duty, the EU and the other countries have the right to protect themselves from imports at too low prices.

- To maintain a countryside alive in all regions,

Sustainable family farming should be maintained and developed: European funds are necessary, especially for small farms and less favoured areas.

The process of concentration of the agricultural production has to be stopped and the production better distributed between the regions and between the farms.

Public services should be maintained and improved in all regions

- The modes of production which harm the environment, use too much energy, damage the quality and the safety of the products, have to be re-orientated.
- Agricultural land should be used first for food production.
- Biodiversity should be safeguarded: GMOs and patents of life must be banned.
- Rural development policy does not have to replace or correct the failures of the CAP, but has to complete it, by developing employment first.
- Short food miles should have priority compared to long transport and to international markets.
- Immigrant agricultural workers have to be treated without discrimination, with the same rights as the Europeans.
- We need international trade rules without dumping, based on food sovereignty, human rights, and international labour rights.

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Belgium

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Mouvement Action Paysanne (MAP)

Vlaams Agrarisch Centrum (VAC)

Denmark

Frie Boender

Europe

Mouvement International de Jeunesse Agricole Catholique (MIJARC Europe)

France

Confédération nationale des syndicats des exploitants familiaux (MODEF)

Confédération Paysanne

Germany

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Bäuerliche Landwirtschaft (ABL)

Greece

NEAK

Italy

Associazione Italiana per l'Agricoltura Biologica (AIAB)

Associazione Rurale Italiana (ARI)

Malta

Assocjazzioni tal-Bdiewa (ATB)

Norway

Norske bonde - og Smabrukarlag (Norwegian Farmers' and Smallholders' Union) (NBS) - Norge

The Netherlands

Nederlandse Akkerbouw Vakbond (NAV)

Portugal

Confederacao Nacional da Agricultura (CNA)

Spain

Coordinadora de Organizaciones de Agricultores y Ganaderos (COAG)

Euskal Herriko Nezakarien Elkartasuna (Union de Ganaderos y Agricultores Vascos (EHNE/UGAV) - Pais Vasco

Sindicato Labrego Galego (SLG) - Galicia

Sindicatos de Obreros del Campo (SOC)

Sweden

Nordbruk

Switzerland

L'Autre Syndicat

Uniterre

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