



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Directorate B. Quality, Research & Innovation, Outreach
The Director

Brussels, 10 September 2020
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Dear Madam,

Thank you for your letter received on 7 September 2020 concerning the two additional calls for proposals published on 30 June 2020, for information provision and promotion measures to restore the market situation in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014. You raise particular concerns with the inclusion of dairy as one of the eligible sectors to benefit from these additional calls.

As you are aware, the EU promotion policy for agricultural and food products requires the yearly adoption of an annual work programme that defines the strategic priorities and their corresponding budgets. As required by Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014, the 2020 annual work programme¹ also provides the specific arrangements enabling the launch of the additional calls to react in the event of serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems.

Confronted with the difficulties faced by the EU agricultural sector, the Commission took swift action and on 22 April 2020 proposed a package of exceptional measures to support the agricultural and food markets most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The measures were published on 4 May 2020 and included *inter alia* the dairy sector. According to the 2020 annual work programme of promotion policy, any additional calls must co-fund actions consisting of information and promotion programmes designed to react in case of unexpected serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems where information and promotion programmes co-financed by the sector would be **complementary to these exceptional measures published on 4 May 2020**², and taken in accordance with Part V (general provisions), Chapter 1 (exceptional measures) of Regulation (EU) 1308/2013 (i.e. Articles 219 to 222).

These exceptional measures include the dairy sector and consequently, the dairy sector is eligible for the additional calls. This is in accordance with Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 and is consistent with the 2020 annual work programme for promotion policy.

We concur with your view that promotion policy can make an important contribution to the implementation of the farm to fork strategy³ by supporting consistent and positive

¹ Commission implementing decision C(2019) 8095 final

² Official Journal of the European Union, L 140, 4 May 2020

³ COM(2020) 381 final

Jasmijn de Boo, Vice-President ProVeg International
Dr. Joanna Swabe, Senior Director of Public Affairs, Humane Society International
Ines Ajuda, Farm Animals Program Leader, Eurogroup for animals
Olga Kikou, Head of Compassion in World Farming - EU

messaging about healthy and sustainable food and enabling citizens to make the right choices.

Pursuing the objective of increasing consumption of healthy foods and to promote a healthy lifestyle and diet amongst children, the school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme has been covered by the successive promotion policy annual work programmes and includes three measures - distribution of products, educational measures and distribution of information materials. In terms of measures implemented, the activities in schools are also eligible under the EU agricultural promotion policy, thus complementing the educational measures and communication activities funded under the school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme.

The annual work programmes 2019 and 2020 also define the promotion of fruit and vegetables as one of the sectors to receive a dedicated budget allocation in order to promote healthy dietary practices. In 2019 and 2020 specific financial support envelopes have been allocated to both simple and multi programmes targeting the internal market in order to highlight amongst other things 'nutritional and health aspects (including proper dietary practices)'. The role of the EU promotion policy in support of fruit and vegetable consumption is recognised as one of the instruments in implementing the actions of the Tartu Call for healthy lifestyles.

As announced in the farm to fork strategy, the Commission is undertaking a review of the EU promotion programme for agricultural products, with a view to enhancing its contribution to sustainable production and consumption, and in line with the evolving diets. In relation to meat, that review should focus on how the EU can use its promotion programme to support the most sustainable, carbon-efficient methods of livestock production. As a first stage in this process, the Commission is currently evaluating the EU agriculture promotion policy. I take this opportunity to invite you and your organisations to actively engage in the open public consultation currently ongoing⁴ and to actively take part in the review of this policy.

Yours faithfully,



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⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/1859-Evaluation-of-the-EU-agricultural-promotion-policy/public-consultation>