



RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK INTERGROUP FOR THE COMMISSION VISION ON THE FUTURE OF LIVESTOCK



INTRODUCTION

"Farming is a core part of our European way of life - and it must always stay that way"- as highlighted in the Commission priorities 2024-2029. As Europe strives to lead the global transition towards a stronger and sustainable economy, the role of the animal agriculture value chain has never been more critical. In these turbulent times, it is our collective responsibility to ensure that the entire animal agriculture value chain, including animal by-products and aquaculture, evolves in a way that is more competitive and more resilient while continuing to shape Europe's landscapes, provide high quality food as well as other products and services for European citizens. This is the main priority of the Sustainable Livestock Intergroup. We emphasise the importance of innovative, science and evidence-based solutions that ensure a fair standard of living and new income opportunities, to continue attracting new generations of professionals, to maintain biodiversity and keep vibrant livelihoods in mountainous regions for example. At the same time, we must ensure that European consumers continue to have access to safe, nutritious, good quality, and affordable food, textiles and fabrics produced within a resilient and sustainable agricultural system.

We believe that by fostering dialogue, promoting best practices, and empowering the different sectors of the animal agriculture value chain, the EU can create a future for livestock farming that works for all. For this reason, we applaud the Commission's initiative to create a livestock workstream, launched by Commissioner Hansen on 8 May 2025 as part of the Vision for Agriculture and Food and **we call on the Commission to ensure that the livestock workstream is equipped with a well-defined structure and the necessary means to fulfil its role.**

Our vision is for a fully resilient agricultural system, providing not just food and nutrition security to the entire EU population and beyond, but also many more products and services, while continuously increasing sustainability in all dimensions – economic, environmental and social. Livestock farming and aquaculture along with their numerous outputs, including by-products, are central and essential for our long-term prosperity. These recommendations are based on the wide-ranging benefits livestock can bring to a sustainable future for everyone, while at the same time identifying ways to further increase the sustainability and resilience of the sector, based on their long-standing traditions and know-how.

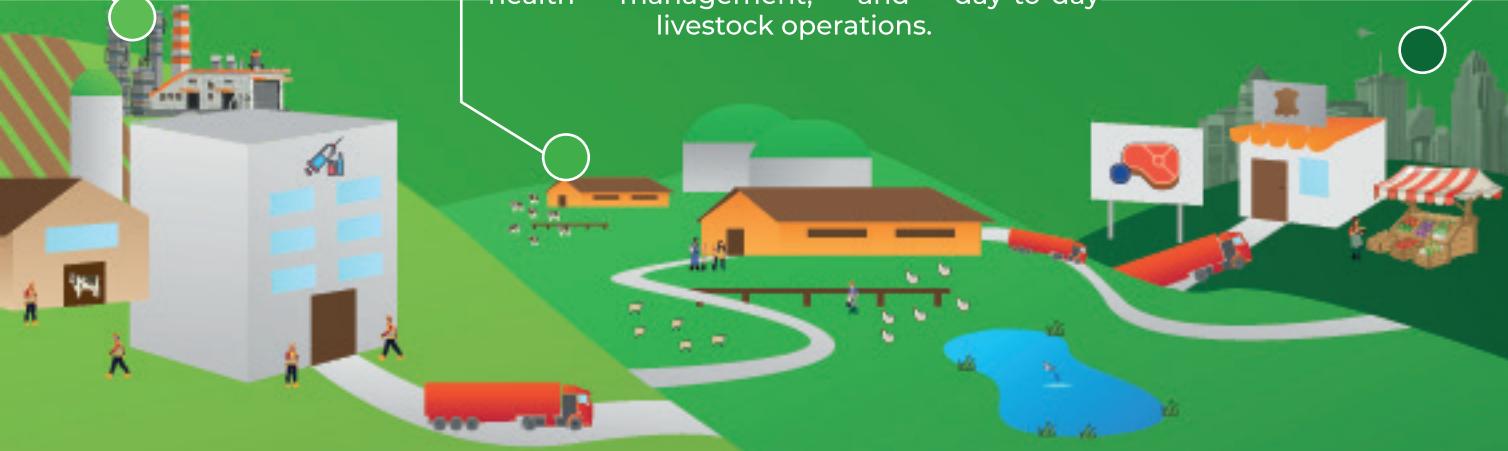
Europe needs policies that meet the specific needs of the animal value chain. It is essential to provide the necessary financial support, technical tools, and policy recognition well-deserved by the sector. Supporting these recommendations can ensure a more resilient agricultural sector, promote responsible and sustainable food and non-food production, and acknowledge the multifaceted value of livestock farming in environmental, economic, and social terms.

To structure a comprehensive set of recommendations, this document was designed to take a holistic view of the livestock value chain. It provides an in-depth analysis of three segments: 1) upstream, 2) on-farm, and 3) downstream, ensuring a complete approach to sustainability across the sector.

Upstream: Refers to all activities and inputs that occur before the farm, including feed production, breeding, and supply of equipment and veterinary services.

Downstream: Encompasses processes after the farm, including slaughtering, processing, distribution, retail, and consumption of livestock products.

On-farm: Covers all activities directly on the farm, such as animal husbandry, feeding, health management, and day-to-day livestock operations.





RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UPSTREAM SOLUTIONS IN THE ANIMAL AGRICULTURE VALUE CHAIN

This section outlines a comprehensive set of proposals aimed at improving the resilience and sustainability of Europe's livestock and aquaculture sectors, by focusing on the availability and accessibility of, as well as the know-how for using tools needed to support all farmers, whichever the farming system. Improving preventive measures, increasing knowledge of farm management tools, and developing innovative breeding and feeding strategies are all essential components of a forward-thinking approach to animal farming.

These recommendations serve the multifaceted purposes of: reducing environmental impacts, increasing production efficiencies, improving the health and welfare of animals, and ensuring the long-term viability of the sector; benefiting farmers, animals and the wider community.

Promote animal breeding as a preventive measure: Animal breeding is a fundamental tool for improving the three pillars of sustainability (economic, social and environmental), animal health, and welfare in commercial, local, and endangered breeds and within all farming systems. Selection for disease resistance and enhanced robustness can improve the health of farmed animals, including in aquaculture contributing to the prevention of animal diseases and reducing the need to use antibiotics. Conventional breeding alongside new genomic techniques are key to continuous improvements. Current animal breeding strategies follow the Code of Good Practices for Responsible and Balanced Breeding, Code EFABAR.

 **We recommend the EFABAR Code of Good Practices for Responsible and Balanced Breeding be recognised as the EU standard when drafting new legislation.**

Invest in positive animal breeding and strategies: Animal breeding has mainly been seen as a tool to improve productivity and feed efficiency. More responsible and balanced breeding strategies that enhance animal health and welfare, reduce natural resource use and climate impacts, and preserve genetic diversity have been developed in recent decades yet they remain somewhat unknown to EU citizens. Calls for banning specific breeds or lines are unacceptable, as they do not factor in current balanced breeding strategies. Responsible breeding can overcome the trade-offs of past breeding strategies and improve animal welfare.

 **We recommend that the Commission invests in ambitious research and innovation frameworks for pre-farm gate activities, including animal breeding and genetics.**

Ensure a science-based, agile, coherent and adaptable regulatory framework: Regulatory updates should recognise the positive role of animal breeding in improving the sustainability and competitiveness of all animal farming systems. Regulations, such as biotechnology related initiatives, should be designed in such a way as to support quick analysis of and adaptation to recent scientific progress, ensuring a safe operating space and supporting the competitiveness of animal breeders both in the EU and at global level.

 **We recommend that the Commission recognises the climate mitigation and adaptation capacities of animal breeding and creates a fair and smart animal data-sharing landscape for breeding purposes.**

Support a dialogue on animal disease preparedness: Animal diseases, particularly those with high rates of morbidity or mortality, can have dire consequences in a first instance for the animals, but also for our food supply and affordability, on the animal by-products, on the socio-economic future of Europe's farming communities, on antibiotic use, on farmers' mental health, and on public health (various animal diseases are zoonotic, meaning they are transmissible to people). In short, animal disease outbreaks can seriously compromise the EU's resilience in many ways. Keeping animals healthy and avoiding mass culls of animals should be top priorities for EU decision-makers. A cost-effective measure that is easy to implement and does not require legislative change, would be to create a platform for regular and timely exchange between the animal health industry and national and EU authorities.

 **We recommend the creation of an animal disease preparedness dialogue and a dedicated rapid alert and response mechanism.**

Promote disease prevention through vaccination: The European Union should incentivise research and development of vaccines against emerging or non-covered animal diseases and finance new antigen, vaccine and diagnostic reagent banks to enhance the EU's preparedness and response mechanisms. The European Commission should also explore with Member States the possibility to coordinate the purchase and supply of vaccines. In addition, animal vaccination should be better encouraged, and farmers who decide to vaccinate their animals should be better financially and politically supported. Indeed, the Commission can play a leading role in ensuring that food products from vaccinated animals are still accepted by the EU's trading partners (EU animal health diplomacy).

 **We recommend the EU to financially support research and development of vaccines, animal vaccination, its promotion, its purchase and supply and its removal as a trade barrier.**

Ensuring a more dynamic framework to adapt to new animal health threats: The knowledge gained through vaccination campaigns and scientific research is an important resource which has highlighted the need for more practical surveillance measures. Given the dynamic nature of animal health and emerging infectious diseases, it is imperative to improve the flexibility of Regulation 2016/429 on transmissible animal diseases ("Animal Health Law"), which is currently under evaluation by the European Commission. A revision of animal disease surveillance rules should ensure that they are more relevant and efficient while bearing in mind the financial constraints that they put on operators.

 **We recommend that the Commission triggers a revision of the Delegated Regulation 2023/361 on the prevention and control of certain listed diseases**

Streamline the approval process for animal health product authorisations: The flagship regulatory innovation of Regulation 2019/6 on veterinary medicinal products is the Union Product Database (UPD), which aims to modernise the marketing authorisation processes for animal health products, but the UPD is not yet functioning to its full intent and capacity. We believe that the UPD could better serve the purpose of simplifying reporting and could be used as a one-stop-shop for reporting where possible (e.g. between UPD and other portals or between EU and national level). This will help to enhance the availability of animal health products as and when they are needed to protect animal health and welfare, and support the farming economy.

 **We recommend that the Commission streamlines the authorisation processes for animal health products to ensure accessibility.**

Ensure a consistent "benefit-risk approach" for animal health products authorisation: Veterinary medicines are governed by the above-mentioned sectoral Regulation 2019/6 and authorised via the European Medicines Agency. Although the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) and European Environmental Agency also scrutinise substances used in the developing and manufacturing of animal health products, it is essential that the benefit-risk approval process continues to apply to animal health products as the risk-based approaches of ECHA do not take into account the benefits of medicines. A blanket ban of substances such as those now classified as PFAS could have disastrous consequences on the availability of essential medicines to protect both animal health and welfare, as well as human health. Companies currently researching alternatives need to be supported in their efforts.

 **We recommend that the Commission considers the impacts of environmental and chemical legislations on the availability of animal health products, and that appropriate exemptions are accorded.**

Maximise the livestock sector's contribution to circularity and bioeconomy: When it comes to making agri-food systems more sustainable, the contributions the livestock sector makes to the bioeconomy are essential. The bioeconomy component is also at the heart of the relationship between the crops and livestock sectors, the side-stream of one feeding the other and vice-versa, both being necessary for the sustainability of agri-food systems. Most residues, side and waste

streams in the agri-food chain can be used either to produce food, feed, bio-based materials, chemicals or bioenergy. The feed outlet allows the livestock sector to close nutrient cycles, thereby allowing an efficient use of resources, contribute to climate change mitigation and the reduction of the environmental impact. It would be important to gain more insights into the role the feed sector plays in this regard, with the help of a Circular Feed Indicator.

 **We recommend the development of a Circular Feed Indicator to obtain more insights on the quantitative and qualitative role of feed used by the livestock sector in the EU bioeconomy.**

Consider regulatory changes to enable more circular feed to become available: Further increasing the circularity potential of livestock farming is part of the answer to reach the objectives of the Competitiveness Compass, as it simultaneously brings innovation, decarbonisation and reduced (import) dependency. However, businesses with circularity ambitions in the area of feed materials production often face regulatory obstacles and administrative burden, also when innovative approaches enable them to produce a feed that meets the standards for safety and quality. There is a clear need to map out the potential for new, innovative resources to become available, and to assess whether existing legal restrictions are still legitimate and proportionate, as they may not be up-to-date with current circumstances.

 **We recommend the development of an EU Circular Feed Roadmap to map out the potential for new, innovative resources.**

Ensure that animals receive all the essential nutrients that support their health, well-being and sustainable livestock production. Animal nutrition science and the use of feed additives enable more efficient and sustainable feeding practices, thereby contributing to better animal rearing through reduced use of resources, less waste, fewer emissions and/or by helping to maintain animals in good health and/or to improve their well-being. Maintaining animals in optimal health through a wide range of tools, including animal nutrition and, thus, with higher resilience to stressors can prevent or limit the need for veterinary treatments, including the use of antibiotics. In addition, adequate animal nutrition and feed additives are essential for creating safe and high-quality animal products.

The specialty feed ingredients industry requires an EU legislative framework that supports innovation in the sector, thereby helping to provide farmers with the tools they need to meet the increasing demands for more sustainable animal farming. Modernisation of the EU feed additives regulation should also contribute to reversing negative trends, such as the feed additives industry increasingly moving research and development and production outside of the EU to third countries which possess more pro-innovation regulatory environments and lower labour and production costs. If done right, the modernisation of the regulation on feed additives could help further advance the benefits of feed additives for a sustainable, competitive and innovative sector in Europe.

 **We recommend that the Commission delivers on the long-awaited revision of EU rules on feed additives without further delay.**

A woman with long blonde hair tied back in a ponytail is working in a brewery. She is wearing a white short-sleeved shirt and a light-colored apron. She is standing at a stainless steel counter, pouring beer from a tap into a clear plastic cup. The background shows large stainless steel tanks and pipes, typical of a brewery setting.

FROM UPSTREAM TO...



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ON-FARM SOLUTIONS IN THE ANIMAL AGRICULTURE VALUE CHAIN

This section outlines a concrete set of recommendations for supporting the livestock and aquaculture sectors at farm level, to ensure a prosperous future for EU producers while limiting its negative externalities and maximising the positives. A comprehensive approach to sustainability in the animal agriculture value chain must consider all economic, social, environmental and territorial aspects. Effective policies must address environmental challenges holistically, while balancing them with other parameters such as the nutritional value of animal products, animal health and welfare, productivity, efficiency, and regional diversity.

Favour generation renewal through increased and targeted support: The future of the livestock sector depends on the next generation of farmers. They need better economic conditions, access to finance, fairer market returns, and greater recognition for their work. Without improvements in profitability and investment in young people, the EU risks production moving to countries with lower standards, harming both Europe's food security, sovereignty and sustainability goals.

The current 2-pillar structure of the CAP – encompassing direct payments, coupled income support, agri-environment-climate measures, animal welfare schemes, and farm modernisation support - can contribute to supporting young farmers. Complementary affordable financing instruments are needed alongside greater recognition and awareness on training opportunities for lesser-known production opportunities such as rabbits or goats.

We recommend that the Commission foresees support for new and young farmers through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and complementary affordable financing instruments.

Encourage the retention and development of mixed farms, or the collaboration and integration between specialised farms.

Crop and livestock production are deeply interconnected, with circularity at the core of their relationship: the by-products of one system often serve as valuable inputs for the other. This mutual reinforcement enhances the sustainability of agri-food systems. Developing synergies between these two types of production is therefore essential. Depending on regional agronomic conditions and the local social context, the most effective approach to fostering these synergies may vary. In some areas, integrating crop and livestock production on the same farm is the best option. In others, encouraging cooperation between specialised farms may be more appropriate.

In reality, mixed farming is not always feasible. Certain regions may have agro-ecological limitations, such as mountainous terrain or poor soil quality, that make it inefficient to grow cereals, for example. Moreover, efficient mixed farming often requires a high level of technical support, which is not uniformly available across all regions. In those cases, it is important to instead encourage and facilitate cooperation between specialised farms.

We recommend that the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) plays a key role in supporting both mixed farms and the interconnection between specialised farms.

Ensure the future CAP is fit for purpose: Livestock sectors such as beef, veal, sheep and goats often operate with thin profit margins which make them vulnerable to price fluctuations. Livestock farms are often located in areas that are less suitable to other types of agriculture where they contribute to maintain grasslands and carbon sequestration. Coupled payments help stabilise income for producers and therefore keep rural livelihoods and livestock production in Europe.

We recommend to keep targeted coupled support for livestock as an essential element of the architecture of the future CAP

Guarantee robust cost and time assessments ahead of proposing revised animal welfare legislation:

Animal welfare is a key priority for European farmers, and the EU has some of the highest standards globally. However, investments for higher standards represent a cost for the producer that is often entirely taken on by the farmer and not passed down through the value chain.

Assessments prior to legislative proposals should evaluate the investment needed and the time required for farmers to adapt. Farmers must be given enough time and additional financial incentives to change their practices without affecting their profitability.

We recommend that the Commission accompanies any proposal to improve animal welfare with a robust socio-economic impact assessment.

Strengthen and harmonise action to manage animal disease outbreaks: Animal diseases pose a serious and growing threat to the livestock sectors. Outbreaks of Avian Influenza, African Swine Fever, Bluetongue, Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Peste des Petits Ruminants, and others have devastating effects such as decimating herds, disrupting trade, and jeopardising farmers' viability and the resilience of the entire sector.

To address this escalating challenge, financing should be significantly improved. A dedicated and reinforced fund, outside of the scope of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to financially support farmers of terrestrial and aquatic animals in their prevention endeavours, and when they are affected by animal disease outbreaks is essential. Furthermore, disease prevention and control should be strengthened at EU level for more harmonised disease management and coordination across Member States.

We recommend that the Commission creates a dedicated fund to support farmers with both the prevention and management of animal disease outbreaks.

Strengthen and support the role of cooperatives: The cooperative model holds a substantial market share in the livestock sectors, especially in the dairy and pigmeat sector, due to the perishable nature of milk and meat—which entails high transaction costs—and the sector's exposure to volatile market conditions. This cooperative model supports economic resilience, producer empowerment and valorisation of livestock co-products and by-products.

We recommend enhanced support for cooperative farming models and recognition of their circularity contributions.

Ensure coherence between EU and Member States policies on aquaculture: Aquaculture is a shared competence between the EU and its Member States. Unless coherence between environmental protection and aquaculture production policies at the Member State level is achieved, the 20-year-long stagnation of EU aquaculture will disappointingly persist.

Therefore, to provide realistic means to overcome this situation, the future EU strategies need to address more efficient spatial planning and finding ways to set compulsory aquaculture production targets for Member States.

We recommend that the EU and Member States coordinate better on aquaculture production target setting.

Ensure a better movement of natural fertilisers: Regulatory frameworks must be made more flexible to enable the safe and efficient cross-border movement of processed manure products, such as compost and digestate, as sustainable fertiliser alternatives. It is also essential to support the development and deployment of on-farm manure processing technologies, including separation, composting, and drying, through rural development and innovation funding.

We recommend that the European Commission recognise processed manure-based products - such as ReNuRe materials and digestates - as organic fertilisers, eligible for use beyond the current limits set by the Nitrates Directive.

Better support biogas production in Europe: Dedicated funding is needed to expand biogas capacity. There is a need to streamline administrative and permit acquisition procedures for small- and medium-scale on-farm anaerobic digesters, and to promote cooperative biogas models that enable multiple farms to pool manure, share infrastructure, and distribute energy revenues. Moreover, digestate should be recognised as a valuable by-product of this process, with targeted support for its use as an enhanced organic fertiliser. In addition, biogas and/or biochar can also be generated from organic waste in other sectors of the livestock value chain such as leather production.

 **We recommend that the European Commission should strengthen investment and policy support for biogas generation from livestock production, as a pillar of the EU's renewable energy and circular economy strategies.**



FROM ON-FARM TO...



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DOWNSTREAM SOLUTIONS IN THE ANIMAL AGRICULTURE VALUE CHAIN

This section outlines a concrete set of recommendations for supporting human nutrition and the sustainable production of by-products from animal agriculture. Increasingly, by-products of human food are being (re-)invented for feeding purposes. In addition, all parts of the animal after its lifespan are being used – either as meat, offal, or as many by-products such as wool and leather, even in high-end pharmaceutical or industrial uses. New fertilisers and energy from animal manure are an additional aspect for improved circularity.

Recognise the central role of animal products in a healthy and sustainable nourishment for people: The production of meat, milk, fish, and eggs is a central building block in effective nutrition security for the population. It provides high-value protein and is an affordable and easily available natural source for many essential micronutrients. Especially for vulnerable population groups, animal-sourced foods are key for a balanced diet, both in different European and global diets. As such, their role in public health should be recognised, and access to these products should remain affordable, particularly for lower-income groups.

We recommend the Commission recognises the central role of affordable meat, milk, eggs and fish for good public health and does not downplay the role of this food group in nourishing people.

Improve consumer information on EU standards for animal-sourced foods & non-foods:

EU livestock farmers and the aquaculture sector invest a lot of money and time in applying very high EU standards, often much higher than those of similar products from third countries. Consumers need to be better informed of these standards to make an informed choice. Some specific sectors are particularly affected by imports of similar products with lower standards and could benefit from an improvement of origin labelling. Products from poultry, rabbits and aquatic animals, including processed products must be better labelled as regards their origin. This would contribute to reducing the distortion of competition between European and third countries' production while promoting quality-based European products and by-products complying with the most demanding standards in the world. Marketing standards for eggs are a good example of policy designed to ensure that the quality of the product stays high, and consumers well-informed.

We recommend improved food origin labelling and development of consumer-awareness campaigns on EU production standards.

Enhance recognition of the positive externalities of livestock through an improved EU narrative: The farming of livestock and aquatic animals can positively contribute to addressing environmental challenges, both in terms of climate change and biodiversity protection. These positive externalities must be better recognised and could form part of educational programmes.

The European Commission should improve its communication on livestock farming and aquaculture and highlight their importance and efforts when it comes to rural development, circular economy, healthy soils and water courses, as well as the production of durable natural materials such as fabrics. Farming should also be presented from the perspective of cultural heritage, circular economy, animal welfare, product labelling and the position in the value chain.

We recommend that the Commission creates guidelines for Member States on how to include European farming, food and non-food production as core elements of the Union educational programmes.

Recognise the role of trade in ensuring a thriving EU livestock sector: The EU is not an isolated actor on the global stage. For instance, international trade of EU animal products allows for a high valorisation of certain meat products and offal, that are not consumed in the EU but in high demand in third countries. Expanding into new markets and securing fair, balanced bilateral trade agreements is important to maintain and strengthen the competitiveness of the EU

livestock sector. On the other hand, using livestock and their products as a trade-off in securing trade agreements should be avoided by any means. Additionally, the Commission should work on resolving trade irritants with third countries, especially on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, to ensure fair market access to EU livestock products and develop new and existing markets through enhanced promotion programmes.

We recommend that the EU promotes recognition of regionalisation and reinforces the EU Promotion Policy for agricultural products and support mechanisms for the promotion of aquatic food products.

Design a European protein strategy balancing global food security, European strategic autonomy and public health: The EU protein strategy needs to be holistic, focusing on proteins from both plant and animal origins, in addition to legumes. The protein strategy should not aim for absolute autonomy, as, although it is important for the EU to become more independent from imports, we must not overlook the fact that the livestock value chain operates in a globalised environment and each region offers certain competitive advantages.

The feed vs food competition debate must be avoided. Only 20-25% of annually produced terrestrial agricultural biomass (crops and grasslands) is edible as human food, with animals converting the remaining 75% into edible and bioavailable proteins. Furthermore, as the safety and sustainability aspects of alternative proteins are still being assessed, it is important that the protein strategy prioritises investments in the livestock and plant-protein sectors. Such prioritisation could help overcome the risks of a concentration of alternative protein production to support the resilience of traditional food production, as well as the socio-economic development of EU rural areas.

We recommend that the Commission establishes a holistic EU protein strategy that prioritises the natural production and balance of both plant and animal proteins.

Acknowledge the role European livestock plays in preserving European culinary heritage and rural landscapes: European rural areas and landscapes are inherently structured around agricultural production, annual and perennial crops, pasture and animals. Europe's infrastructure is fully built on agri-food production and the continued vibrancy of Europe's rural population is upheld by this sector.

It is undeniable that the infinity of traditional recipes and specialties from Europe, the cooking styles, the food products, and the traditions of sharing food with friends and family are well-recognised and loved globally. Our gastronomy is an essential part of Europe's cultural heritage, and it is based on authentic and sustainable agricultural production.

We recommend that the European institutions promote the gastronomy and food heritage of the EU to global export markets as well as within Europe.

Close the knowledge/communication gap between livestock producers and citizens:

While the number of farmers producing livestock is continuously reducing, consumers are increasingly disconnected from agricultural realities, making them vulnerable to misinformation campaigns that depict all livestock farming as unsustainable or unethical.

The sector must proactively engage with the public, emphasizing the importance of responsible meat production, the progress made, and the role of livestock in sustainable food systems. It is important for policy makers to support the communication efforts from the sector to let citizens understand how their food is produced.

We recommend policy makers to support national/local initiatives helping livestock producers communicating on production. e.g. supporting the EU-wide creation of agricultural fairs in EU Capitals

Support science-based environmental assessments that consider the full benefits of circularity of agro-food products: Current sustainability assessments do not sufficiently take into account the diverse realities and positive externalities on the ground. The EU has highly resource-efficient production sites and regions, and others that give more value due to other

environmental and additional social benefits, such as biodiversity and rural infrastructure. It is important to value all approaches as contributing to sustainability and circularity of the sector and as being an important part of the agri-food production of the future.

We recommend seeking for environmental and wider sustainability schemes to take into account the full circular nature of animal-sourced agri-food products based on science and the diversity of realities contributing to sustainability.

Ensure a more coherent and coordinated trade policy: International trade presents opportunities to promote high-quality EU livestock products. With several Directorate Generals responsible for imports and exports, and trade with different third countries, it is however quite complicated for producers to be coherent when it comes to the various elements of trade (e.g. tariffs, duties, TRQs, SPS, GIs, etc.). Given the strategic importance of trade, we also highlight the critical role of trade diplomacy in preventing and resolving tensions, misunderstandings, and market access barriers.

We recommend that the Commission adopts a more coherent and coordinated approach to trade policy by recognising that animals and animal-based products are different sorts of commodities. This should include a well-defined allocation of responsibilities among all involved Directorates-General and the designation of a specific lead entity to ensure strong interdepartmental coordination.

We commend ongoing initiatives aimed at promoting EU products, fostering regulatory cooperation in areas such as animal health, welfare, food safety, environmental protection, and strengthening dialogue with trading partners.

Ensure better implementation of animal transport rules: The transporting of live animals is a central part of the animal agriculture value chain, and practices are continuously being improved, be it through different production exchanges, or by improving the transportation and loading/offloading methods to protect the well-being of the animals. Farmers and transporters are highly conscious of the needs of the animals in their care and assure the best possible transport conditions.

Further solutions are being sought as to how transport conditions inside and outside the EU can be improved. When done well, according to the rules, trade and transport of animals are an integral part of a circular approach. Training for workers/ transporters on the ground and swift implementation of the existing rules will help with solving more diverging situations than additional rules or restrictions on trade.

We recommend further support be granted to improve transport conditions for animals and ensure the correct application of existing EU rules.

Strengthen and facilitate the livestock sector's contribution to the circular economy: Livestock farming is central for the circular economy as it plays a vital role in enriching soils through organic fertilisers derived from the anaerobic digestion of livestock manure, keeping the landscape intact through grazing, producing high-value proteins for human nutrition, and further valorising by-products (directly or through feed) of natural origin into highly valuable, durable, long-lasting and biodegradable fashion products, or highly valuable non-food applications such as in medicines, while also contributing to sustainable energy production. To maximise the potential of the circular economy we have several recommendations:

We recommend to enhance education and culinary promotion of the benefits of consuming certain animal-sourced products that are not favoured traditionally in the EU, to make the full use of the animal.

We recommend to support the development and a better recognition of the circularity benefits for animal-based products, and alleviating barriers (Nitrates Directive, cross-border transport...) for further use of them.

We recommend that markets better valorise animal products and by-products not consumed in the EU, and that such products are not subject to geopolitical tensions (e.g. pigmeat carcasses and offal).

We recommend the EU Commission to recognise leather and fur's longevity, durability, and repairability when considering a product's environmental footprint and contributions to circularity and waste reduction. By promoting leather and fur products through the Enjoy it's from Europe campaign, the EU Commission can better support natural farm-sourced materials as an alternative to fossil fuel-based fashion.

Better recognition of the animal sourced textiles and materials: Wool, leather and fur provide a natural, renewable alternative to fossil fuel-based materials, maintaining a source of income for farmers. There is a clear need to promote policies for naturally sourced materials and fabrics (e.g. leather, wool, fur...). Such farm sourced materials should be prioritised in environmental footprint assessments (PEF), regulatory burdens (particularly in traceability requirements) should be reduced, and lower VAT rates should be applied to strengthen the market position of natural materials against fast fashion.

We recommend that the European Commission supports research and development into eco-friendly uses of animal by-products, including wool, fur and leather, removes any barriers to their use, and actively promotes use.

Research and implement new uses for wool: Once a valuable resource, wool and a few lesser by-products have become a cost burden for many farmers, often ending up as waste.

We recommend the European Commission supports research into and implementation of sustainable and innovative uses for wool, such as biofuels production to further contribute to the circular economy, keeping rural areas vibrant with job opportunities.

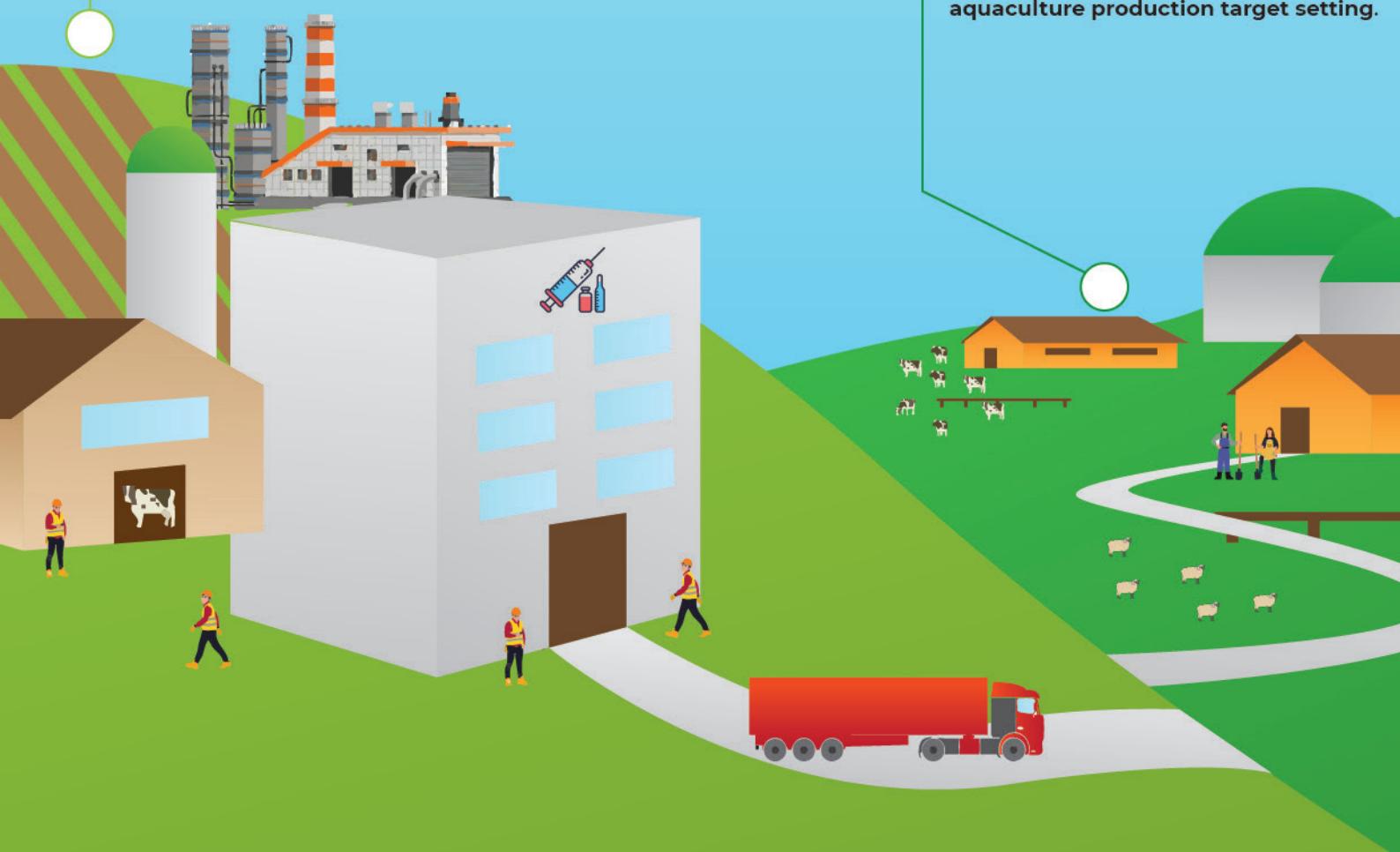


RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK INTERG

UPSTREAM

The EU should:

- recognise the **EFABAR Code of Good Practices for Responsible & Balanced Breeding** as the EU standard;
- invest in ambitious **R&I frameworks for pre-farm gate activities**;
- support the climate mitigation capacities of animal breeding and **create an animal datasharing landscape**;
- create an **animal disease preparedness dialogue** and a dedicated **rapid alert/response mechanism**;
- financially support R&D of vaccines**, animal vaccination, its promotion, its purchase and supply;
- trigger a revision of the prevention and control of certain listed diseases** (Reg. 2023/361);
- streamline the authorisation processes for animal health products**;
- analyse the impacts of environmental/chemical legislations on the availability of animal health products**;
- develop a Circular Feed Indicator** to obtain more insights on the role of feed;
- design a Circular Feed Roadmap** to map out the potential for new, innovative resources;
- deliver on the revision of **EU rules on feed additives** without further delay.



ON FARM

The EU should:

- foresee support for new and young farms** and the CFP;
- ensure that the **CAP keeps on playing a key role for mixed farms and connections with specificities**;
- keep **targeting coupled support for livestock**;
- accompany any proposal on animal welfare with a **socio-economic impact assessment**;
- create a dedicated fund to support farmers** in the prevention and management of animal diseases;
- enhance support for cooperative farming**;
- support sustainable and innovative uses of wool** to further contribute to the circular economy;
- strengthen investment for biogas generation** and production;
- recognise processed manure-based products** as materials and digestates - as organic fertilisers;
- together with Member States, **coordinate aquaculture production target setting**.

GROUP FOR THE COMMISSION VISION ON THE FUTURE OF LIVESTOCK

DOWNSTREAM

The EU should:

- recognise the key role of affordable meat, milk, eggs and fish for good public health;
- establish a holistic EU protein strategy that prioritises the natural production and balance of both plant and animal proteins;
- keep on promoting the gastronomy and food heritage of the EU to global export markets as well as within Europe via the EU Promotion Policy;
- to communicate on national/local initiatives helping livestock producers communicating on production;
- seek for environmental and wider sustainability schemes to take into account the full circular nature of animal-sourced agri-food products;
- adopt a more coherent and coordinated approach to trade policy by recognising that animals and animal-based products are different sorts of commodities;
- grant support to improve transport conditions for animals and ensure the correct application of existing EU rules;
- support market initiatives to better valorise animal products and by-products not consumed in the EU;
- recognise leather and fur's longevity, durability, and repairability when considering a product's environmental footprint and contributions to circularity and waste reduction;
- create guidelines for Member States on how to include European farming, food and non-food production as core elements of the Union educational programmes;
- further improve food origin labelling and develop consumer awareness campaigns on EU production standards;

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ABOUT THE INTERGROUP

Sustainable Livestock is a newly established intergroup in the European Parliament, officially launched in early 2025. Its first co-chairs, who are also the key supporters of the initiative, are MEPs Alexander Bernhuber (AT, EPP), Maria Grapini (RO, S&D), and Benoît Cassart (BE, Renew).

The intergroup aims to provide a platform for Members of the European Parliament to discuss both the diversity of existing farming practices and emerging methods and technologies that support and improve animal farming systems. It also seeks to develop informative tools to raise awareness about food production. By taking a holistic approach, the intergroup will enable MEPs to better assess and balance both the benefits and challenges of the sector. This will help depolarize current debates and pave the way for realistic, science-based/sustainable solutions in animal farming—including enhanced animal welfare.

More information are available on the intergroup's website:
sustainablelivestockintergroup.eu