



Global Research Network  
Working Paper

**Ensuring food security in Europe: the EU Farm to Fork  
Strategy**

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On May 2020, the European Commission presented [the Farm to Fork for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system intending to promote a more safe, robust, resilient and sustainable food system](#).

The Farm to Fork Strategy (F2F) is the new comprehensive 10-year European plan to drive the transition to a fair, healthy, and environmentally-friendly food system in Europe.

The strategy represents the first real EU attempt to design a comprehensive European food policy agenda, regulating each stage of the food chain, from production to distribution to consumption.

The model proposed by the EU used a joint approach to reconcile together food consumption and production with ecological needs and promotion of environmental protection, to make European food systems more sustainable. The farm to fork strategy comes just 6 months later the [European Green Deal](#) announcement and the two initiatives are strictly inter-related.

The Farm to Fork Strategy stands in line with the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and also aims at raising standards globally, through international cooperation and trade policies so that its ecological transition is not offset by the externalization of unsustainable practices in other regions.

### **What the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategy aims to achieve?**

The plan includes a list of 27 measure to pave the way for greener food production and healthier and suitable diets in the EU, highlighting the need to enforce food security and resilience of the EU food supply, after the COVID -19 pandemic experience.

The key aspects of the strategy consist of:

- ***Ensuring sustainable food production;***
- ***Ensuring food security;***
- ***Stimulating sustainable food processing, wholesale, retail, hospitality and food services practices;***
- ***Promoting sustainable food consumption and facilitating the shift to healthy, sustainable diets;***
- ***Reducing food loss and waste;***
- ***Combating food fraud along the food supply chain.***

The Agenda establishes ambitious targets, such as:

- a reduction by 50% of the use and risk of chemical pesticides, and the use of more hazardous pesticides by 50% by 2030;

- a reduction of nutrient losses by at least 50% while ensuring that there is no deterioration in soil fertility. This will reduce the use of fertilizers by at least 20% by 2030;
- a reduction of overall EU sales of antimicrobials for farmed animals and aquaculture of 50% by 2030;
- reaching 25% of agricultural land under organic farming by 2030.

### **How to ensure food security in Europe?**

In the EU, 33 million citizens (EUROSTAT, 2018) cannot afford a quality meal every second day. At the same time, about 20% of the food produced in the EU is currently wasted (EU FUSION, 2016) and obesity is rising. Over half of the EU's adult population is now overweight (EUROSTAT), contributing to a high prevalence of diet-related diseases, including various forms of cancer and related health care costs. Overall, the diets of European consumers are not in line with dietary recommendations and the food environment does not always allow the healthy option to be the easiest one.

As already mentioned, ensuring food security and citizens' health appears as one of the key priorities in the new EU agenda. The implementation of food security in Europe aims to make sure all people have access to sufficient, nutritious, sustainable food that meets high standards of food safety and quality, plant health, animal health and welfare, while meeting their dietary needs and food preferences.

The EU plan highlights the attention on the current increasing threats marked by climate change, natural disasters and biodiversity loss and their impact on the food chain. Covid-19 pandemic has also demonstrated the importance to improve the resilience of the food system as a response to crises, to ensure food security and food safety.

### **Conclusion**

The Farm to Fork Strategy has the ambition to transform European food systems into a global standard for sustainability.

The ambitious targets established in the new EU Food Policy Agenda need to be accompanied by concrete support measures to reach them. The Strategy proposes several reforms of existing policies to achieve the targets: a review of [the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive](#) and the [Animal Welfare regulation](#) among others. Moreover, the achievement of the objectives mentioned will also need to be reflected in the [Common Agricultural Policy](#). By 2023 the Commission will make a legislative proposal for a framework for a sustainable food system in order to help align national policies and ensure coherence among all food-related policies.

The transition to sustainable food systems needs a collective approach involving public

authorities at all levels of governance, including cities, rural and coastal communities, private sector actors across the food value chain, non-governmental organisations, academics and citizens.

Every EU Member State will have to follow the Farm to Fork Strategy by implementing it on a national level, contributing to reach the EU targets, and will benefit from any additional support measures.