



**RÉINVENTER
LA PAC**
avec le Collectif Nourrir

TOWARDS A FUTURE COMMON AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD POLICY



**PROPOSALS FROM
COLLECTIF NOURRIR
FOR A NEW APPROACH TO EU
AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD POLICY**

FOREWORD

AS PREPARATIONS BEGIN FOR THE NEXT COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY (CAP), SET FOR 2028, COLLECTIF NOURRIR IS TAKING AN EARLY STAND TO PROMOTE ITS VISION: A FAIRER, MORE SUSTAINABLE FORM OF AGRICULTURE THAT SERVES THE COMMON GOOD.

Drawing on the involvement of its 54 member organizations and its experience with the *Pour une autre PAC* [For Another Common Agricultural Policy] platform, Collectif Nourrir is engaging in this new reform process with the conviction that agriculture and food should return to the centre of the European project.

Negotiations over the European Union's 2028–2034 multiannual financial framework (MFF) and the future CAP are beginning in an unprecedented context of overlapping crises. The geopolitical and trade landscape is marked by the war in Ukraine and the instability of US trade policy, compelling us to reassess our sovereignty and dependencies. The rise of conservative forces in many EU Member States is reshaping political alliances within the European Parliament and Council, often to the detriment of social justice and environmental and climate concerns. These issues, though sidelined politically, remain central to citizens' concerns. At the same time, recent farmer protests underscore the urgent need to address the fundamental issues European farmers face, particularly with regard to income.

For decades, and across multiple reforms, the CAP has been geared toward the industrialization of our agricultural and food systems.

It has contributed to the deep crisis we now face: a dramatic decline in the number of farmers across rural Europe; the endangerment of our production capacity (soil degradation, loss of biodiversity and water resources, diffuse pollution, resurgence of animal diseases and resistance phenomena); the weak resilience of our systems to climate and economic




shocks; increasing dependence on fossil fuels, inputs and imported products; and a rise in health issues linked to ultra-processed foods.

Rather than ensuring food security for European citizens and a decent standard of living for farmers, the CAP has helped deepen inequalities, drive many farmers into precariousness in Europe and beyond, and weaken our food system as a whole.

For Collectif Nourrir, the changing global landscape demands that the CAP return to a path of food sovereignty, understood as the ability to provide, in a stable and sustainable way, food that is chosen for all, without compromising our future capacity to produce it and without endangering those who produce it globally.

With this report, we aim to present our proposals for a future Common Agricultural and Food Policy (PAAC) for the European Union, one that delivers accessible food aligned with the needs of the population, guarantees farmers a decent income through fair prices, supports agroecological systems that underpin the resilience of our food production and contributes to rural development by enabling the renewal of farming generations.

 **LORINE AZOULAI AND MATHIEU COURGEAU, CO-PRESIDENTS OF COLLECTIF NOURRIR**

MOVING BEYOND A CAP THAT UNDERMINES FOOD SYSTEMS AND FARMERS' LIVELIHOODS

Originally created to ensure food security across the continent and improve the standard of living for the agricultural population, the CAP has gradually become a tool for the modernization and industrialization of food production, with significant consequences for the environment and farm structures. Despite successive reforms, the current CAP continues to weaken our food system.

INCOME SUBSIDIES CONCEALING STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

In France, over one third of EU agricultural funding takes the form of per-hectare income support, paid to farms regardless of their practices or production. These Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) entitlements encourage structural expansion. Introduced initially to align with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules, the subsidies were designed to offset the long-term decline in agricultural prices within an increasingly competitive global market—ultimately benefiting the agro-industry far more than farmers' incomes. **By concentrating support on the largest farms, the CAP is holding back new entrants and making it harder to maintain smaller-scale farming systems.** Redistribution mechanisms, often left to the discretion of Member States, have failed to counter this trend. **It is estimated that over 40% of European farms could disappear by 2040, primarily the smallest among them.**

ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES FAILING TO PREVENT AGRICULTURAL ECOSYSTEM COLLAPSE

The CAP's environmental measures have proven insufficient to mitigate the negative impacts of current agricultural models on climate and biodiversity. Eco-scheme funding, introduced in 2023 to reward environmentally beneficial farming practices, has been claimed by over 90% of CAP-supported farms in France without leading to any significant shift in actual practices. AECMs remain severely underfunded, offering little real support for farmers seeking to transition towards agroecology. Recent roll-backs on environmental eligibility criteria only reinforce the lack of political will within EU institutions to steer the CAP towards meaningful change. **As it stands, the CAP continues to support standardized practices that fuel climate change, biodiversity loss and the deterioration of animal welfare—ultimately threatening the medium-term capacity of ecosystems to provide food.** Heavy reliance on imported inputs also reinforces dependencies that further weaken agricultural production in an increasingly unstable world.

↘ The CAP not only undermines the resilience of our food system, it also fails to support its transformation to reduce ecological, social and health-related effects. In France alone, the hidden costs associated with compensating for or repairing these effects are estimated at **€19 BILLION PER YEAR**³.

It is high time to turn the CAP into a policy tool that reverses this trend and involves all stakeholders in its governance.

¹ [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/Reg-Data/etudes/ATAG/2022/699621/IPOL_ATA\(2022\)699621_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/Reg-Data/etudes/ATAG/2022/699621/IPOL_ATA(2022)699621_EN.pdf)

² AECMs: Agri-environment and climate measures, multi-year subsidies under the CAP's second pillar aimed at supporting farms in changing their practices.

³ *L'injuste prix de notre alimentation* [The unfair price of our food], report drafted by Secours Catholique, CIVAM, Solidarité Paysans and the Fédération Française des Diabétiques, September 2024.



A PAAC DEDICATED TO FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

AT A TIME WHEN THE ISSUE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S DEPENDENCIES HAS NEVER BEEN MORE PRESSING, THE CONCEPT OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY HAS RE-EMERGED IN PUBLIC DEBATE—OFTEN WITH RADICALLY OPPOSING INTERPRETATIONS.

The Common Agricultural and Food Policy (PAAC) advocated by Collectif Nourrir is grounded in the right to food and in the notion of food sovereignty as defined by the United Nations in the UNDROP⁴. Adopted in 2018, this declaration enshrines “the right [of peoples] to define their food and agriculture systems and the right to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods that respect human rights”. It further specifies that “States shall establish mechanisms to ensure the coherence of their agricultural, economic, social, cultural and development policies”.

Food sovereignty does not mean self-sufficiency or autarky. Nor can it be reduced to simplistic calls to “produce more” driven by states claiming to “feed the world”, particularly at the expense of other countries’ productive capacities. The fact that 735 million people around the world currently suffer from hunger⁵, and that 1 in 3 lack access to food that is healthy, sustainable and balanced, clearly demonstrates the failure of the dominant globalized, finance-driven model of industrial agriculture focused on productivity that has prevailed for decades. The key lies in ensuring a fair distribution of food production and in making food not only physically but also economically accessible, so that everyone can benefit from a healthy diet. It also lies in supporting resilient production models that are less dependent on inputs, that protect and restore agroecosystems, and that provide fair remuneration to those who implement them.

⁴ English acronym for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas

⁵ <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/445c9d27-b396-4126-96c9-50b335364d01>

As the EU’s first and most influential policy, the future PAAC must form the backbone of this food sovereignty.



OBJECTIVES OF THE FUTURE COMMON AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD POLICY



COLLECTIF NOURRIR BELIEVES THAT THE FUTURE COMMON AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD POLICY (PAAC) MUST PURSUE A SET OF INTERCONNECTED OBJECTIVES:

→ PROVIDE HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE FOOD ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

- Prioritize support for food production that meets the population’s needs and expectations, for **healthy, high-quality and diverse diets**
- Develop **local, organic and fair** food supply chains
- Ensure that food is both **affordable** for all and **profitable** for farmers

→ PROMOTE FOOD DEMOCRACY

- **Co-develop the PAAC** with all stakeholders concerned by agricultural and food issues: farmers’ organizations, civil society groups working on environmental, food, animal welfare, health and international solidarity issues, researchers and public actors in agriculture, the environment and health
- Make the PAAC a public policy grounded in the **promotion, protection and enforcement of the right to food**

→ ENSURE FAIR WORKING CONDITIONS FOR FARMERS, BOTH AT HOME AND GLOBALLY

- **Protect farmers from price volatility and economic, climate and health crises**, while guaranteeing fair incomes
- **Support new entrants** into farming and ensure large numbers of farmers can make a living on **human-scale** farms, ending the trend toward land concentration and farm expansion
- Make **aid criteria fair, transparent and geared** toward the common good, with support going to those who actually work the land
- Encourage **local initiatives** that contribute to **vibrant** rural areas

→ SAFEGUARD THE ENVIRONMENTAL FOUNDATIONS OF HEALTHY FOOD PRODUCTION, WHILE RESPECTING ANIMAL WELFARE

- Support the agroecological transition towards more resource-efficient, **autonomous and resilient farming systems** that foster biodiversity and meet the needs of farm animals
- **Recognize and reward practices that benefit the environment, consumer health and animal welfare**, that are well adapted to local contexts and that restore the viability of soils and agroecosystems, such as organic farming, agroforestry and pastoralism
- **Address health and climate risks upstream** by encouraging farms capable of adapting to these challenges



OUT PRINCIPLES FOR THE FUTURE PAAC

To meet its objectives, the future PAAC must be grounded in principles that ensure coherence across public policies. The 2024 Strategic Dialogue on the future of agriculture has opened up new possibilities for rethinking how aid is distributed, how farmers' incomes are supported and how agroecological practices are strengthened. Our proposals are aligned with these prospects.

→ A TRULY COMMON PAAC,

underpinned by ambitious goals and a solid framework for action, with implementation adapted at the regional level to reflect local needs.

→ A PAAC ROOTED IN A FOOD DÉMOCRACY APPROACH,

with governance and evaluation entrusted to steering and oversight committees at each level (European Union, Member States, Regions), involving professional farming organizations, research bodies, civil society and public authorities responsible for agriculture, environment and health.

→ A PAAC WITH A BUDGET COMMENSURATE WITH THE AGROECOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL TRANSITION

at stake. To help farmers and agroecosystems produce our food sustainably, over the long term, the PAAC budget must be substantial and entirely dedicated to environmental, social and regional challenges. To engage in these transitions, farmers must have fair, stable incomes, primarily through fair prices rather than non-targeted per-hectare

subsidies that encourage both farm expansion and standardized, input-intensive production systems.

→ A PAAC ALIGNED WITH A BROADER OVERHAUL OF PUBLIC POLICY

in support of healthier, more diverse and affordable diets and a fairer, more sustainable agriculture. The impact of the future PAAC can be guaranteed only if public policy as a whole aligns with the same objectives at the different levels:

- At the global level, international institutions must shift from a competition-focused framework to one that guarantees people's food sovereignty.

- At the European level, directives on commercial practices must strengthen the role of farmers in value chains. EU trade policy must protect farmers in both Europe and the rest of the world. This means ending imports of products that do not meet equivalent sanitary, environmental or social standards—and, conversely, banning exports to third countries that violate the same principles. Animal welfare must also be better recognized and embedded in EU directives. Lastly, the European Green Deal must be reaffirmed and the PAAC brought into alignment with it.

- Within Member States, land, tax and social policies must support the installation and retention of large numbers of farmers. Agricultural priorities must align with environmental and public health policies—not the other way around.

Public policy on agriculture and food must no longer support production and distribution systems that generate hidden costs and negative externalities for public health and the environment. Nor must it continue to enable trade policies that undermine food sovereignty in Europe and beyond.

A POLICY FRAMEWORK ALIGNED WITH TODAY'S URGENT CHALLENGES

The future PAAC must be equipped with tools that fully address today's pressing challenges of farm incomes, food, health, generational renewal, the environment and animal welfare, while upholding the principles of solidarity and democracy.

>1. PRICE AND MARKET REGULATION FOR INCOME STABILITY AND UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO HEALTHY, DIVERSE FOOD

Make price and volume regulation the primary mechanism for supporting farm incomes, while ensuring access to healthy food for all.

>2. TARGETED SUPPORT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY, ANIMAL WELFARE AND DIVERSIFICATION OF PRODUCTION

Safeguard and restore agroecosystems for the long-term production of healthy food by rewarding farmers already implementing "positive" practices and supporting others in transitioning.

>3. A COHESIVE STRATEGY GENERATION RENEWAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Reverse the trend toward farm consolidation by supporting the installation of a growing number of genuinely active farmers and make small- and medium-scale farms drivers of local development.

>1.

PRICE AND MARKET REGULATION FOR INCOME STABILITY AND UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO HEALTHY, DIVERSE FOOD

In the post-2027 PAAC, income support for farmers should gradually shift from non-targeted per-hectare payments to mechanisms based on price and production volume regulation. Tools already exist within the common market organization, which must be strengthened, expanded and re-imagined to also address the population's needs in terms of food diversity and affordability.

→ ENSURE FAIR AND STABLE PRICES THROUGH MARKET REGULATION AND PRODUCTION VOLUME MANAGEMENT

Strengthen the public intervention scheme to support stable, fair prices, notably by regulating production volumes to prevent surpluses and stabilize markets. This should go hand in hand with measures that improve access to healthy, diverse food at fair prices for all.

→ STRENGTHEN THE POSITION OF FARMERS IN THE VALUE CHAIN AND SUPPORT THE DIVERSIFICATION OF PRODUCTION

Increase support for producer organizations to improve their bargaining power within supply chains. Provide greater backing for collective initiatives by pro-

ducers in areas such as marketing, processing and distribution across a wide range of products, thereby supporting farm-level diversification.

→ REINFORCE TOOLS FOR MANAGING CLIMATE AND HEALTH-RELATED RISKS

Establish a crisis reserve fund that reflects the scale of future climate and health challenges, aligned with support tools that help farming systems better adapt and build resilience to these risks.

>2.

TARGETED SUPPORT FOR PRACTICES THAT BENEFIT THE ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY, ANIMAL WELFARE AND DIVERSIFICATION OF PRODUCTION

The future PAAC must place a particular focus on building the resilience of our production systems. This is essential to safeguarding the medium- and long-term capacity of our agroecosystems to produce food. It means addressing climate and environmental challenges while reducing our dependence on inputs (e.g. Russian fertilizers and US soya) and cutting imports of key foodstuffs, such as fruits, vegetables and pulses. Agroecological systems that use fewer inputs offer solutions to these challenges. The future PAAC must support a shift in production methods and provide robust backing for systems that actively enhance the sustainability of agroecosystems.

→ ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONALITY

Access to PAAC support must be contingent on meeting minimum environmental and social standards, to prevent practices that harm workers, consumers or ecosystems. This conditionality should align with transition measures and the remuneration of environmental services, based on an approach that is both incentive-driven and progressive, linking support to the actual practices of farmers.

→ TRANSITION SUPPORT

Encourage and assist farms in their transition toward agroecology through multi-year contracts with phased improvements in practices, financial support to secure the transition, funding for support structures that guide farmers and investment aid aligned with the farm's transition plans.

→ PAYMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Provide incentive-based, progressive support to systems that deliver environmental benefits, including:

- improved water, soil and air quality
- biodiversity preservation



- mitigation of and adaptation to climate change
- enhanced animal welfare and human-animal relations
- diversified production to increase the resilience of farms and the food system

→ SUPPORT FOR ORGANIC CONVERSION AND MAINTENANCE

Organic farming should be the flagship model supported within this framework, in line with European environmental and climate goals.

→ SUPPORT FOR PRODUCTION THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF A HEALTHY, DIVERSE DIET

e.g. pulses, vegetables, fruit growing and pasture-based livestock farming.



>3.

A COHESIVE STRATEGY FOR GENERATION RENEWAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The vitality of rural areas depends on a sufficiently large and active farming population to sustain services and other local activities. Reversing decades of rural decline and halting the steep drop in the number of farmers is key to revitalizing rural life. In France, half of all farm holders will reach retirement age by 2030⁶. Generational renewal is therefore central to rural development. The moments of farm set-up and farm transfer are ideal opportunities to adopt new systems and practices, so support for new entrants must also serve as a lever for agroecological transition and production diversification.

→ **A CLEAR DEFINITION OF 'ACTIVE FARMER'**, as a physical person directly involved in farm work, helping to support new entrants into farming. This definition must prevent financial and corporate structures—where the majority of labour is outsourced—from receiving PAAC payments. However, collective farm ownership models in which all members actively work on the farm should fully qualify.

→ A COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT SCHEME FOR NEW ENTRANTS, INCLUDING

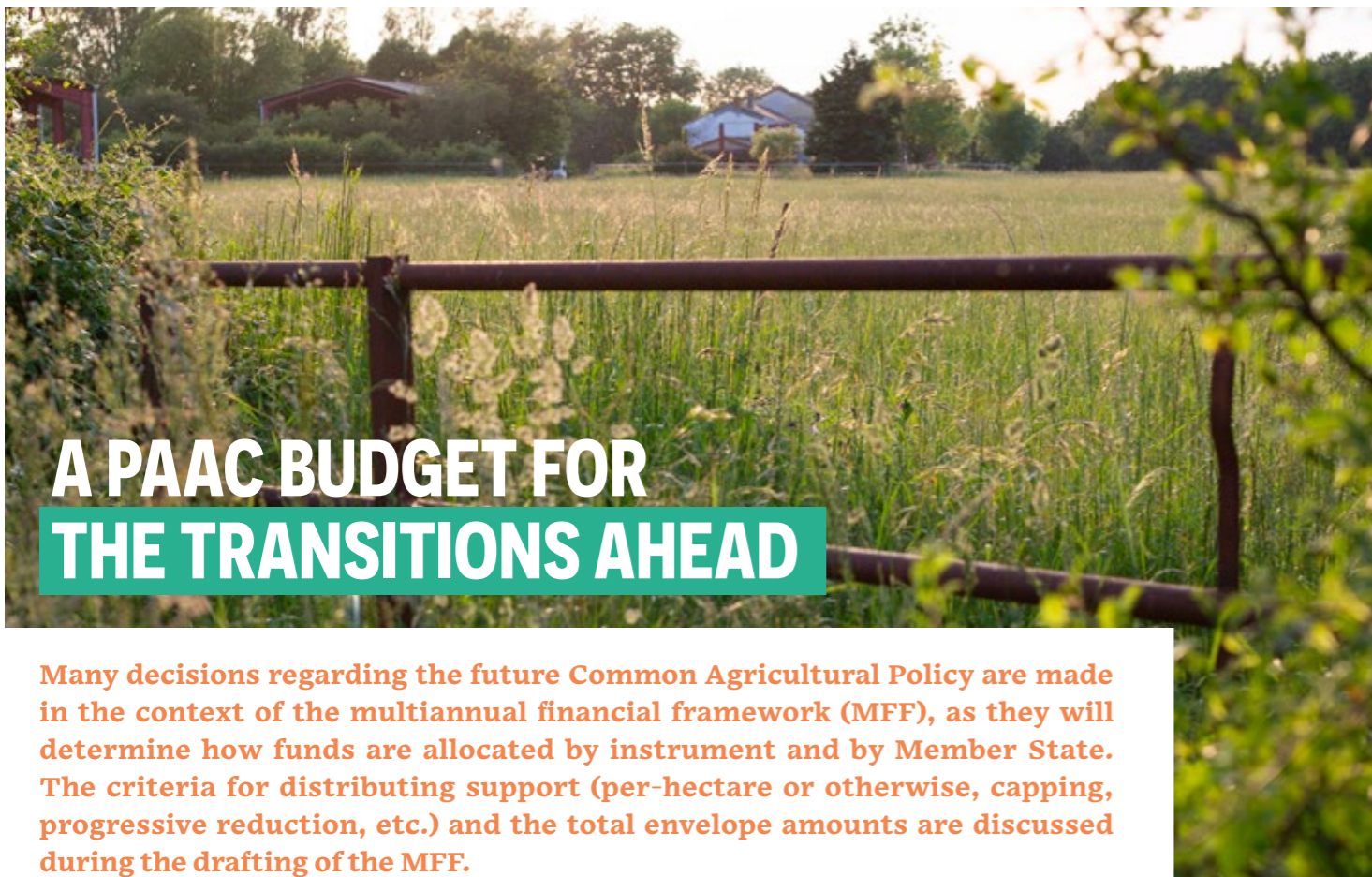
- Grants adapted to a variety of profiles (including people over 40) and project types, with specific support for women and those from non-farming backgrounds
- **Direct payments** to active farmers entering the profession
- **Young farmer grants**
- Investment aid for new farms aligned with **agroecological practices and food production diversification**
- **A support scheme for farm transfers**, including tools to facilitate both installation and handover, such as phased installation, test farms and mentoring
- Funding for **the training of future farmers** and for organizations supporting them

→ LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING FUNDING FOR RURAL PLANNING, BUILDING ON LEADER PROGRAMME PRINCIPLES

→ SUPPORT TO MAINTAIN FARMING IN AREAS FACING ABANDONMENT OR NATURAL CONSTRAINTS

→ SUPPORT FOR LOCAL SUPPLY CHAIN INITIATIVES PROMOTING ORGANIC, FAIR AND LOCAL FOOD, ESPECIALLY THOSE ENHANCING UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO FOOD, SUCH AS PUBLIC CATERING AND PILOT SOCIAL FOOD SECURITY SYSTEMS

⁶INSEE, Transformations de l'agriculture et des consommations alimentaires, édition 2024 [Transformations in agriculture and food consumption, 2024 edition]: <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/7728869?sommaire=7728903>



A PAAC BUDGET FOR THE TRANSITIONS AHEAD

Many decisions regarding the future Common Agricultural Policy are made in the context of the multiannual financial framework (MFF), as they will determine how funds are allocated by instrument and by Member State. The criteria for distributing support (per-hectare or otherwise, capping, progressive reduction, etc.) and the total envelope amounts are discussed during the drafting of the MFF.

The 2028–2034 MFF must maintain a sufficiently strong agricultural budget to support the PAAC proposed by Collectif Nourrir :

→ A PAAC WITH AN AUTONOMOUS AND ROBUST BUDGET

in which agricultural income support is no longer based on blind per-hectare payments (Basic Payment Scheme), but rather on price and market regulation. All remaining direct payments should target goals such as the agroecological transition, generational renewal and access to healthy, sustainable and diverse food. Given the scale of the transition required, strong public commitment and a significant CAP budget are essential.

→ A BUDGET FUNDED BY PUBLIC MONEY

based on the principle of “public money for public goods”, and not reliant on the commodification of practices or ecosystem services. Likewise, CAP funds for risk management should not be channelled into the insurance sector.

→ A PAAC STRUCTURED AROUND TWO FUNDS FOLLOWING THE CURRENT EAGF (EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL GUARANTEE FUND) AND EAFRD (EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL FUND FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT) MODELS:

• A *first pillar* encompassing price stabilization tools and targeted annual direct payments (for environmental services, new entrants, production diversification).

• A *second pillar* covering multi-year and rural development support, including direct aid for agroecological transition, support for areas with natural constraints, installation aid, funding for advisory structures for both the agroecological transition and installation and support for local food access initiatives and for rural development projects.

In this context, **the second pillar budget must be clearly prioritized**, as it is the driving force behind the transition.

→ ALL DIRECT PAYMENTS SHOULD BE REDUCED PROGRESSIVELY, CAPPED AND AWARDED SOLELY TO ACTIVE FARMERS.

COLLECTIF NOURRIR AND ITS MEMBERS



Collectif Nourrir brings together **54 French farmers'** and civil society organizations, working to reshape the agricultural and food system. Together, we advocate for **fair, democratic and ecological agricultural and food policies** that ensure **food sovereignty**, uphold **the right to food**, enable producers to make a **living from their work** and support thriving **living systems**.



CREDITS

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