



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Food Safety, Sustainability, and Innovation
Strategy and Policy Analysis

The Directors

Brussels
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Ms Anna Spurek
Green REV Institute
Email: anna@greenrev.org

Subject: European Open Letter "Safe Food, Safe Planet, Safe Future"

Dear Ms Spurek,

We would like to thank you and the co-signatories for your letter dated 17 February 2025, in which you emphasise the necessity for a sustainable transformation of food systems in the European Union. We are replying to you on behalf of the President, Ms Ursula von der Leyen, the Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare, Mr Olivér Várhelyi and the Commissioner for Agriculture, Mr Christophe Hansen.

As you rightly state, moving towards a more healthy and sustainable food system remains a cornerstone of the European Green Deal and a priority for many citizens. The Commission has made many proposals to this end, which are now being negotiated by the Council and Parliament. These include among others and, as pointed out in your request, legally binding food waste reduction targets to be achieved by Member States by 2030. On 19 February 2025, the two co-legislators reached a provisional agreement on the targeted revision of the waste framework directive which includes these targets.

As you underline in your recommendations, sustainable public procurement can influence the way in which food is produced and consumed to achieve a transition to healthier and more sustainable food systems. The Vision for Agriculture and Food⁽¹⁾ presented by the Commission on 19 February recognises that public procurement “can provide the right incentives to promote the consumption of local, seasonal products, and food produced with high environmental and social standards, including organic products and food originating from shorter supply chains”. To this end, as announced in the Vision, the Commission will come forward with a legal proposal to strengthen the role of public procurement. Moreover, the Commission is currently working, with the support of the Joint Research

⁽¹⁾ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, A vision for Agriculture and Food, Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations, COM/2025/75 final

Centre, the Commission's science and knowledge centre, on the development of possible sustainable public procurement criteria.

Regarding your suggestion related to the right to information in view of amending the rules on food labelling, we would like to reassure you that the current EU food labelling rules ensure a high level of consumers' protection, provide transparent information, and respect the right of the citizens to make informed choices. The Commission remains committed to working with Member States and stakeholders to engage in a comprehensive dialogue on the lifelong prevention of non-communicable diseases. This includes addressing food reformulation, the impacts of ultra-processed products, and the effects of certain food marketing practices on the most vulnerable consumers as you highlighted in your letter.

We acknowledge that antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is one of the most urgent health threats, with economic impacts across human, animal, and plant sectors. This is why combatting AMR remains at the top of the Commission's political agenda. In this context, the EU legal framework on veterinary medicinal products lays down rules on prudent use of antimicrobials in animals. Notably, the use of any antimicrobial requires a veterinary prescription, and antimicrobials must be used according to the dosage regime specified in the marketing authorisation. The preventive use of antimicrobials or use outside their marketing authorisation terms is permitted only under strict conditions. The Commission is closely monitoring the implementation of those measures in the Member States and tracking progress towards the aspirational goal of halving overall EU sales of antimicrobial veterinary medicines for farmed animals and aquaculture by 2030. These principles also apply to the use of medicated feed which is considered by the European Medicines Agency as the safest way of applying oral administration to large groups of animals when such treatment is unavoidable for animal health reasons. A strict legal framework therefore has been created for the manufacturing, storage, transport placing on the market and use of such medicated feed.

Regarding the agri-food sector's role in the protection of our climate and planet, the Vision for Agriculture and Food recognises the sector's need to contribute. At the same time, it acknowledges the diversity and specificities of agriculture and the importance of taking into account the socio-economic needs and challenges of the transition. The Vision therefore aims to balance the three dimensions of sustainability and proposes a holistic and pragmatic approach to supporting the agri-food sector in the sustainability transition. This is notably true for the livestock sector as a key part of EU agriculture that requires a long-term vision. The Commission will therefore launch a dedicated work stream that will address the challenges of the sector in a holistic way, taking into account both the competitiveness and resilience and the climate and environmental footprint of the sector.

We would like to thank you again for your letter.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine GESLAIN-LANEELLE

Klaus BEREND