



**Friends of  
the Earth  
Europe**

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## FRIENDS OF THE EARTH EUROPE

### VISION

EU policies for food and farming need to prioritise the provision of sufficient, decent and sustainably produced food to all citizens. Trade policy needs to adhere to these goals, through protecting and increasing food sovereignty, ensuring that the food system stays within planetary boundaries, and guaranteeing food security and the right to food for all. It should be guided by the need to build resilience and diversity, as well as for healthy and sustainable diets for all.

Our vision for trade policy is one in which local food markets and short food supply chains flourish, local economies are strengthened, and there is decent work and fair prices in farming, processing and retailing. It is a vision in which regional production of feeds and other inputs is supported and prioritised over globalised production.

High standards of protection for workers, consumers and the environment are safeguarded and extended, along with the continued right for governments to decide freely on their own food and farm system. Trade policies are designed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and contribute to agriculture that minimises the impacts on wildlife, the environment and the climate. In our vision trade and agricultural policies would favour diverse enterprises and cooperatives over multinational and consolidated corporations. They would encourage small scale and sustainable farms and food production, helping to reduce transcontinental trade in agricultural commodities, and allowing countries to maintain and develop their own food systems. As a result, Europe's resource footprint is reduced to equitable levels. International trade follows strict fair-trade conditions, ensuring fair prices and conditions for producers, and is subservient to international environment and social agreements including existing labour, climate and biodiversity conventions.



## PROBLEMS

Globalised and commoditised food chains, together with greater consolidation in the agri-food sector, lead to standardised and industrialised food and farming, which damages nature, livelihoods, human health and cultural diversity. Future food security is at risk due to a lack of resilience and diversity.

Large scale, industrial and export-oriented food production causes severe environmental, social and climate impacts and conflicts with local communities. It also endangers small scale farming.

Trade and agricultural policies have too much emphasis on producing food and agricultural commodities for international trade, rather than on feeding people healthily, or building a sustainable and resilient food system.

Despite most food in the EU still being consumed close to where it is produced, trade policies prioritise global food chains, economies of scale and reduced costs (and prices).

Liberalisation of the food sector and globalisation of food chains mean that small scale food producers and processors struggle to survive in a global market place which favours mass-produced food and industrial farming over quality and diversity, and larger corporations over small and medium-sized producers. Countries are not allowed to protect their food production to ensure that all citizens have sufficient food, or to promote local and sustainable food and to ensure work for small scale farmers.

Under both WTO and bilateral trade agreements, citizens' preferences for higher food safety standards or GMO-free food are challenged as barriers to trade.

Trade policy entrenches Europe's dependence on land abroad, often damaging communities and nature, as well as the right of peoples to develop their own food systems.

## DEMANDS

The EU needs joined-up policies on food, farming and trade that ensure the right to sufficient, decent and sustainably produced food for all citizens.

The EU needs to reduce its dependency on imported raw materials such as soy and palm oil, to reduce its global impact and only use its fair share of the world's resources.

Trade policy must adhere to, and be subservient to, agreed EU social, health and environmental standards, and serve internationally agreed goals for workers, climate, biodiversity and sustainable development.

Trade and agriculture policies must allow and support governments to protect and develop local food economies, small scale farming, sustainable agriculture and measures to build resilience in the food system.

Trade, food and public procurement policies should enhance high food safety rules and the right to take well informed decisions by consumers.

The EU needs to halt its strategy of liberalising other countries' food and public procurement systems as a condition for agreeing trade deals.

Trade policies must recognise the value of social, consumer, health and environmental standards and must not treat them as an extra cost or as a barrier to trade.

