



**Enhancing agricultural resilience in the  
face of climate change – The view of  
European farmers and co-operatives**

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## Enhancing agricultural resilience in the face of climate change – The view of European farmers and co-operatives'

Dear Vice-President Vigliotti,

Dear Commissioner Hansen,

Distinguished guests,

- Thank you for inviting Copa and Cogeca to contribute to today's vital discussion—one that **strikes at the heart of European farming: climate change** and the urgent need to increase the **resilience of the sector** together with **robust risk management**.
- **My name is Franck Sander.** I'm a **French arable farmer**, producing wheat, maize, sugar beet, and hops. I serve as Vice-President of Copa-Cogeca and the FNSEA, France's leading farmers' union.

### Farming Today: an increasingly volatile activity

- Let me be clear: **farming in Europe** has become more **difficult and volatile than ever**.
- We are facing a **perfect storm**:
  - ✓ War at our border
  - ✓ Escalating geopolitical tensions
  - ✓ Economic uncertainty and regulatory overload
  - ✓ Unfair trade competitions
  - ✓ New pests and disease
  - ✓ And above all, **climate events that are more frequent, extreme, and unpredictable**
- These are **not abstract threats**. They're **realities that farmers like me face daily**.
- **Take sugar beet production in France: yellow virus**—spread by aphids—have caused in the past a nationwide yield loss of 30%, crippling growers and threatening the sector's survival. The **use of plant protection products** that allow farmers to cope with this threat is **increasingly limited!**
- **Or cereals in 2024:** in certain areas of northern Europe, **excessive rainfall brought to over 30% of the crop production**; in the south, **persistent drought led to similar losses**.
- These **extremes now define the new normal**.
- On top of **climate shocks, farmers must navigate rising input costs, unfair global competition, and mounting regulatory pressure**—challenges that erode income, undermine confidence, and stall investment.
- We are **being asked to do more, with less**—while **feeding Europe, preserving landscapes**, and ensuring environmental sustainability.

## Agriculture: Europe's Strategic Asset

- Agriculture **is not just another sector. It is about sovereignty, security, and societal stability.**
- As **Mario Draghi rightly said: “Dependencies are vulnerabilities.”**
- Europe **must invest in its own strength—starting with agriculture.**
- In the face of **today's “permacrisis,” farming must remain viable in all EU regions**, and its strategic role must be fully recognised by EU and national authorities.
- As **enshrined in the Treaties, agriculture delivers more than food:**
  - ✓ It sustains rural communities
  - ✓ Maintains natural landscapes
  - ✓ Provides affordable food for consumers
  - ✓ And ensures long-term food security for the Union

## Our Vision for the Post-2027 CAP

- In this context looking to **maintain the resilience of the farming sector in the face of climate change**, Copa-Cogeca has identified **six strategic priorities for the next CAP:**
  1. **Strengthen competitiveness** and ensure food security
  2. Improve **farm income and profitability** in the green transition
  3. **Support generational renewal** and **empower women** in agriculture
  4. Drive **investment** in innovation and sustainability
  5. Build **better risk and market management** tools
  6. Reinforce **farmers' position in the value chain**

## A Call for Smarter Risk Management

- Let me now focus on **priority #5—risk and crisis management which is also the topic of today's conference.**
- In today's volatile context and unprecedented risk, **farmers need a comprehensive, flexible toolbox of cost-effective instruments—complementary** to existing national schemes—that covers:
  - ✓ Climate and weather risk
  - ✓ Market volatility
  - ✓ Animal and plant health threats
- We must **foster stronger synergies within the CAP, and with other EU tools**, to improve farmers' resilience and ability to adapt.
- Let me recall in this respect the **key role of agri-cooperatives**. Cooperatives' work towards a **better (and more efficient) use of resources, and production planning**, and

adapting production to market needs, help **farmers cope with market crisis and de-risking**; help foster the use of digitisation and access to technology and innovation.

- The Commission's **new Vision for Agriculture and Food** proposes some interesting **pathways on risk management** calling for:
  - ✓ **Collaboration—between the Commission, Member States, the EIB, banks, insurers, and the wider value chain.** This can enable smarter pooling of risks, better insurance coverage, and improved affordability.
  - ✓ **Greater flexibility** in the use of tools
  - ✓ **Targeted crisis reserves focused on major disruptions**—such as extreme weather or epidemics
  - ✓ Incentives for proactive risk strategies
- But **words must now be matched with coordinated action** and **not undermining the Common Agriculture Policy**

### Conclusion: Secure the Budget, Secure the Sector

- None of **this is achievable without investments** and **dedicated CAP budget**.
  - **The multiple transitions required by the EU to its farming sector, will only be achieved if they are properly financed.**
1. As **regards investment**, the European Investment Bank has estimated the yearly **investment gap in the agriculture sector of €62 billion**. This enormous.
    - The **European Investment Bank's decision to identify agriculture and the bioeconomy as key priorities under its 2024-2027 Strategic Roadmap is welcome** and work should be done in tandem with the farming community and, specifically, agri-cooperatives to see this opportunity lead to action on the ground.
  2. As regards, the **CAP, Agriculture contributes to 1.3% to the EU's GDP, yet the CAP currently accounts for just 0.4% of the EU GDP**. This imbalance must be addressed through increased and **inflation-adjusted allocations in the post-2027 MFF**.
  3. **The strength of the CAP lies in its commonality.** Its current structure — anchored in the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) — **strikes a balance between targeted direct support and long-term investment**. Merging or dissolving these funds into broader cohesion frameworks would be disastrous for rural development and the stability of the agri-food sector.
    - **Farming is the backbone of Europe's resilience.**
    - Let us give **it the tools, the recognition, and the support it needs**—to be resilient **towards the next crisis ensuring preparedness and stability for Europe!**

Thank you.