



European Milk Board



Press release

**EMB milk producers with tractors outside the EU Ministers of Agriculture Conference -
“European milk production needs proper basic conditions”**

Luxembourg / Hamm:

Today, Monday 27.10.2008, milk producers came on tractors from Belgium, France, Luxembourg and Germany to Luxembourg, to the venue of the meeting of the EU Ministers of Agriculture, who are deliberating today and tomorrow on the health check of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The aim of the demonstration was to make it clear that the milk producers in Europe are united in their call for flexible market control that enables them to generate fair milk prices in the market.

Romuald Schaber, President of the European Milk Board (EMB), said in his speech to some hundreds of dairy farmers from all over Europe: “We don’t want any subsidies in the form of a milk fund, we want basic conditions that bring about a working, fair market in which the cost of producing milk on the farms is paid.” The EMB therefore demands the following measures with regard to the health check:

An increase or reduction in the European milk quota depending on market demand and not on a political stipulation in 2008 to 2015h

An effective European, individual-farm limit on volumes now and after 2015

Regulations on fair market access that protect the European market against imports whose prices and standards are below the level of the internal market

The creation of a legal framework that enables milk producers to adjust the volume of milk flexibly to market demand.

“With these demands the European Milk Board is calling for agricultural policy decisions guided by the reality of the market and by the needs of the milk producers and consumers”, stressed Jean-Louis Naveau, French member of the EMB Executive Committee during the demonstration. In most European countries, milk is traditionally produced in grassland areas and disadvantaged regions. So milk producers play an important role in terms of preserving and tending the cultural landscape, as well as conserving viable rural areas. “Consumers, too, benefit directly from fair, cost-covering farm-gate milk prices. They are the basic prerequisite for securing the future supply of fresh, high-quality dairy produce from the region day in, day out,” added Fredy de Martines from the Luxembourg EMB member LDB.

The proposals for deregulation currently being put forward by politicians serve in a biased way the interests of an export-oriented dairy industry that wants to purchase milk as cheaply as possible to then sell it on the world market in the form of powder or butter. The proposals fly in the face of social interests – secure supply, high quality of produce, diversity of agriculture, humane and ecologically correct breeding and food sovereignty. It is patently obvious from the way the financial markets are going what risks speculating on future global growth markets entails. This is no way to proceed when it comes to food! That is why the EMB already called on the European Ministers of Agriculture in Annecy to assume their social responsibility and adopt the right basic conditions.

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“At this moment we go straight forward to a collapse of the market because of the organised over-production and that’s why we need an immediate stop of volume increase and a dairy summit to cope with the coming crisis for the dairy farmers”, said Romuald Schaber at the end of the manifestation in front of the meeting place of the European ministers of agriculture.

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Photos of the demonstration can be viewed on our homepage www.europeanmilkboard.org