

Manifesto

Keep the farm TTIP- and CETA-free

Stop TTIP and CETA in the interest of our farmers, consumers and food supply

The European Union (EU) and the United States (US) are negotiating a free trade agreement (TTIP). They do so in secret, the precise content is unknown. But all signals are red for agriculture and animal husbandry in the EU and the US. With TTIP nearly all EU agricultural markets face cheaper US-American agricultural products produced at lower standards, to the detriment of farmers' incomes, the safety of food, workers' rights, the quality of the environment and animal welfare. CETA, the EU-Canadian agreement which is comparable to TTIP, will lead to similar negative effects in the EU, especially for the beef, pork and arable sector.

In Canada dairy farmers will be negatively affected by European cheese imports distorting their market and prices, while currently they use a well-functioning supply management system.

In the US farmers will among others be negatively affected by the EU attacking the state rules on pesticides, factory farms and local procurement that support local efforts to rebuild their food and farm systems.

Within these free trade treaties no requirements may be imposed on the method of production of imported goods. Only food safety is recognized, to a limited extent. The EU and the US also have fundamentally different ways of determining whether products and substances are safe and allowed on the market. EU decisions about food safety and environmental issues are based on the precautionary principle: so the industry has to prove that a new product is safe. The American government only prohibits a product or substance if it has been proved beyond doubt that it is harmful. For instance, in the US 82 toxic pesticides are allowed that are banned in the EU. Also Identification and Registration in animal husbandry is much less strict in the US. Furthermore, US agriculture and animal husbandry do not face any legal federal animal welfare standards, and they face much lower environmental, food safety and labour standards. That is partly why production costs in the US are a lot lower than in the EU. The situation in Canada is comparable to the US as regards these standards.

Unfair competition for farmers and workers

So, if the EU, Canada and US mutually recognize each other's standards, cutting import taxes will unavoidably lead to unfair competition from products from the US and Canada. Establishing tariff-free import quotas for US and Canadian products will also lead to unfair competition and lower prices. The European market will be disturbed which has far-

reaching implications for the continuity of the primary agricultural sector in Europe. Unfair competition is forcing farmers either to scale up or to close family farms in animal husbandry as well as in arable farming. This also leads to loss of jobs in the upstream and downstream industries. Working conditions and wages of workers throughout the agricultural sector will continue to be under pressure. As NAFTA showed these agreements will have similar negative effects on family farmers in the US and Canada.

Standards under pressure

The European Commission and governments in many member states argue that standards are not going to be reduced. However this does not provide any guarantee for farmers and consumers, because products with lower standards will be allowed in. The EU is also already delaying and easing legislation in these areas in the run-up to TTIP. The standards concerning food safety are even being lowered already. For example the current low EU maximum residue levels for pesticides on food, will be increased to the higher Codex Alimentarius level.

Moreover raising these standards is made virtually impossible by TTIP and CETA. After ratification by member states the Regulatory Cooperation Body's new environmental, animal welfare and food safety regulations will be judged by the criterion of 'trade distortion'. They might even try to get rid of current European standards on food safety like GMOs, use of hormones and antibiotics, pesticides and so on, that are yet forbidden. We can't allow such an undemocratic process by technical experts under the influence of agribusiness. It would lead to more harmonization without any control by citizens and elected representatives.

In future these standards should be raised instead of lowered, but only on condition that the farmers are paid for the additional costs involved in this increase of standards, and on the condition that the EU market is protected against products which comply with lower standards. These and other free trade agreements however prohibit such measures.

American, Canadian and European studies show that European agriculture and livestock will be gravely disadvantaged by TTIP and CETA: more imports, lower production levels and lower prices. Canadian and American family farmers will face similar negative effects. The only ones profiting will be agroindustry on both sides of the Atlantic. We therefore find it incomprehensible that our politicians are so keen on TTIP and CETA.

We want the TTIP negotiations to be stopped, the European Parliament and the Canadian Parliament to say “No” to CETA, and we call on EU member states to not ratify CETA.

Signed by:

Farmers organisations

National:

Austria: ÖBV-Via Campesina Austria – ECVC

Belgium: FMB – Flemish Milk Board (member European Milk Board) -- Flanders
FUGEA – Fédération Unie de Groupements d’Eleveurs et d’Agriculteurs -- Wallonia
MIG – Milcherzeuger Interessengemeinschaft (member European Milk Board) -- Wallonia

Finland: ESVY ry – Southern Finland Organic Farmers Association

France: La Confédération paysanne – Confederation of Peasants
L’OPL (Organisation des Producteurs de Lait) de la Coordination Rurale – Milk producers

Germany: AbL – Arbeitsgemeinschaft bäuerliche Landwirtschaft e.V.

Italy: Associazione Rurale Italiana (ARI)

The Netherlands: BD-Vereniging – Vereniging voor Biologisch-Dynamische landbouw en voeding – Association for Biodynamic Agriculture & Food
Bionext – representing the Dutch organic sector, including farmers, processing industry, trade and retail
DDB – Dutch Dairyfarmers Board (member of European Milk Board)
LTO Varkenshouderij – Pig farmers (member COPA Netherlands)
NAV – Nederlandse Akkerbouw Vakbond – Dutch Arable Farming Union
NMV – Nederlandse Melkveehouders Vakbond – Dutch Dairy farmers’ Union
NVP – Nederlandse Vakbond Pluimveehouders – Dutch Poultry Farmers’ Union
NVV – Nederlandse Vakbond Varkenshouders – Dutch Pig Farmers’ Union
Toekomstboeren – Future Farmers

Romania: Eco Ruralis – ECVC

Spain: COAG – Coordinadora de Organizaciones de Agricultores y Ganaderos – Coordinator of Organizations of Farmers and Cattlemen
EHNE Bizkaia – Basque Country

Sweden: NordBruk

Switzerland: Uniterre

Europe wide: European Coordination Via Campesina

Civil society organisations

National:

Boerengroep – Farmers Foundation (students Wageningen University) – The Netherlands

Compassion in World Farming Nederland – The Netherlands

Ecologistas en Acción – Spain

FNV Agrarisch Groen – Trade union for agricultural workers – The Netherlands

Global Justice Now – United Kingdom

Milieudefensie – Friends of the Earth the Netherlands

Platform Aarde Boer Consument (ABC) – Platform Earth Farmer Consumer – The Netherlands

Slow Food Deutschland e.V. – Germany

Europe Wide:

Compassion in World Farming

Corporate Europe Observatory

IATP – Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (United States and Europe)

TNI – Transnational Institute