The European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA) is the voice of Europe’s next generation of farmers to the European institutions.

- Founded in Rome in 1958 (50th anniversary in 2008!)
- 22 member organisations and 3 observer members from the 27 EU Member States
- Represents around 1 million young farmers in Europe from all categories

**The main objective’s of CEJA:**
- Promote a younger and innovative agricultural sector across the EU 27
- Create good working and living conditions for young people setting up in farming and those who are already “Young Farmers”,
- Facilitating conditions for young people to establish a career in agriculture
- Informing, training, organising and representing young farmers in Europe
- Informing society about the roles of agriculture

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European agriculture must be fiercely competitive on global markets, offer food security to European citizens in the wake of a significant global rise in food demand, take a predominant role in the fight against climate change, produce a wide range of different local products of high quality and which offers many social services to our European citizens. For this to materialise, Young Farmers need fair, long-term income perspectives which allow for the development of innovative and modern farm enterprises. Such a bright and positive European Model of Agriculture will work if Europe’s leaders have the political will to support and defend it in Europe and abroad!

Giacomo Ballari, CEJA President
Our model of European Agriculture in the future

The European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>YOUNG FARMERS OFFER</strong></th>
<th><strong>YOUNG FARMERS NEED</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High added value for society</strong></td>
<td><strong>Installation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food</strong></td>
<td>Stable economic long-term perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food security</td>
<td>Financial support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food safety</td>
<td>Training and Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer protection and choice</td>
<td>Exchange programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh local and diverse products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social services</strong></td>
<td><strong>Innovation tools</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job creation and growth in rural areas</td>
<td>Modern technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep many farms and renewal of generations of farmers</td>
<td>European labels linked to territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counter-urbanisation</td>
<td>Mandatory : products of origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countryside management</td>
<td>Multi-functionality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Tourism</td>
<td>Diversification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage and traditions conservation</td>
<td>Export strategy for our products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal welfare</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agriculture as a vital tool to combat climate change</strong></td>
<td><strong>Agri-enterprise tools</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renewable energies</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
<td>Business skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable development</td>
<td>Integration with agri-food and innovation policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO2 emission reduction</td>
<td>A modern European market mechanism strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research in environmental protection</td>
<td><strong>Lifelong learning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exchange programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advisory services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CEJA member organizations from all major regions of Europe participated in a survey to determine the **vision of Europe’s Young Farmers after 2013**.

Young farmers have highlighted a vision consisting of several main key issues identifying our European Model of Farming by 2015:

- Planning stability and predictability of the CAP
- Renewal of generations a priority for Young Farmers: Installation and Investment
- Competitiveness and Agriculture as a guarantor and contributor of jobs and sustainable growth of rural areas.
- Consumers’ expectations and responsibility – Local, high quality food production
- High added values for society: Rural development, landscape and territorial cohesion
- Protection of our planet, combat climate change and ensuring a safe and healthy environment
- Risk (Markets and Climate)
- Lifelong learning, training and a European exchange programme
- Multi-functionality and diversification of products
- Youth innovates faster!
- Globalisation and external trade

Each theme has been detailed on the subsequent panels.
• Young Europeans need less uncertainty, much better predictability and long-term reforms of the EU agricultural policy

• Promote a modern European market strategy adapted to the international context, which duly takes account of the new opportunities the international markets offer. Until then, proven market instruments currently in operation should only be suppressed if there is an alternative acceptable by all stakeholders.

• Long term predictability in all decisions is key.

“Don’t suppress our current tools before having clear vision of the alternatives”. [FR]

“Infinite reforming of the CAP makes it difficult to even develop a medium-term vision of the future of European agriculture”. [BE]

“Only a clear economical long-term perspective in agricultural policies will encourage young farmers to set up in the future.

Europe’s leaders must commit to this”. [FR]
A priority for young farmers Installation and Investment

Renewal of generations in Agriculture is a fundamental objective in the European Model of Agriculture. Facilitating installation and assistance with first investments will only ensure that young farmers set up if it is followed by an integrated approach in line with their business objectives.

“Installation and investment aid is a key instrument for farmers and rural development”. (IT, ES, PL)

“We receive loans with enthusiasm, especially because subsidies for interest-payments have been reduced few years ago”. (DK)

“We need those aids to support and enable Young Farmers to set up and to maintain their activity”. (ET, FI, PT)

“Support in installation and investment is essential to keep Young Farmers in peri-urban areas”. (BE)
Agriculture can greatly contribute to job creation and sustainable growth in rural areas. European Agriculture needs to be officially recognised as an important guarantor and contributor of jobs and growth in rural areas. Staying and becoming more competitive in global Europe needs to become a fundamental principal for the future model of the entire European Union. In this context, the future model of agriculture needs a new approach which incorporates our contribution to the EU growth and the creation of job opportunities in rural areas.

“Our future competitiveness will translate in multiple jobs and sustainable growth of rural areas and ensure the renewal of our generations” (PL)

“In my opinion, innovation, modern technology, lifelong learning, a strategy for labels of local origin and multi-functionality must go hand in hand in a future CAP to increase the global competitiveness of the European agricultural sector”. Giacomo Ballari, CEJA President

“Young Farmers should have a leading role in terms of innovation and diversification, for instance through bio-energy, tourism activities and new products, to remain competitive.” (EE, BE, IT)

“Competitiveness means producing quality products: it is the cornerstone of EU agriculture”. (PT, IT, DE)
CONSUMERS' EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITY

Young Farmer's commitment to local food production of highest quality

The development of quality products within local and global markets must be considered an efficient way to ensure competitiveness whilst equally responding to consumers’ demands. At the same time, consumers’ expectations need to be translated into consumer purchases – in the supermarket and the restaurant alike. To reach this aim it is important to offer wide information on products and to make the consumer recognize the value of local food production of highest quality.

"The content of the shopping cart at the checkout needs to correspond to the expressed desires when entering the supermarket to make our future model of Agriculture work" (FR)

"More than ever, young farmers respond to the consumer’s demands: food of higher quality, safe, wholesome and tasty". (DE, BE)

"We try to base our production on the image of the regional food produced by family farms, providing healthy and safe products". (LU, BE)

"Recognizing added value of local products means respecting quality farming". (IT)

"Consumers need better knowledge of local products to be aware of their value and make a choice." (FI, ES)

This overarching principle needs to be included in a successful future European Model of Agriculture

"Some farmers are already providing food safety and taking part to quality control systems, but we should all move on that direction". (FI, ES).

"Our objective is to produce high-quality products based on environment and local traditions." (HU)

"Territorial production and markets need to be strengthened and supported". (DE, IT)
Rural development, landscape and territorial cohesion

Young Farmers bring about an attractive countryside, by developing the rural economy and life, and preserving landscapes. Thereby they play a crucial role in territorial cohesion, balancing territorial inequality between rural and urban areas.

“In our very rural country, agriculture is an essential element to keep the countryside alive”. “That is why the CAP has to provide production possibilities in all regions of the EU including disadvantaged areas”. (FI)

“A strong rural development policy includes a strong focus on agriculture”. (LU)

“Local services by Young Farmers improve quality of life in rural areas”. (DE)
Modern Agriculture is to be considered as an essential future element for the reduction of CO2 emissions and can greatly contribute to combating climate change. This key element of the future European Model of Farming helps to protect present and future generation of farmers, consumers and citizens alike. In addition, high environmental standards in Europe ensure a safe and healthy environment.

“With my 200h of green crops, I have 200h which continuously convert dangerous CO₂ to clean air for us all” (FR).

“Protection of the environment, management of rural landscapes, preservation of biodiversity and animal welfare are already part of our environmental aid system, in which over 90 % of farmers are taking part”. (FI)

“Protecting the environment and the water supply is a serious challenge that must be met to guarantee the future and the sustainability of agriculture”. (ES)

“Protecting local markets is important as they contribute to the protection of local traditions and the environment”. (HU)

“Non trade concerns like protection of the environment, animal welfare, biodiversity and management of landscapes need to be taken into consideration when making policy choices.” (BE)

“We should pay attention to a careful use of fertilizers and equipments according to plant’s needs”. (ET)
Climate changes, natural disasters, price instability... are some of the unpredictable events young agri-entrepreneurs have to face constantly. Managing those risks is a future element of our European Model of Agriculture.

“Risks management tools are effective economic measures to maintain price stability and to guarantee food security and farm income”. (PT, ES)

“We need risk management tools to be covered at least from consequences of climate changes”. (EL)

“We also need different assurance possibilities according to the local specificity of crop growth”. (ET)

“By introducing new instruments as risk and crisis management, the European Agriculture Policy would take care of the increasing instability in an open world market”. (BE)
**Lifelong learning, training and a European exchange programme**

Lifelong learning in agriculture is an essential means to remain competitive and sustainable in our global and rapidly changing world. One focus under a future model of Agriculture should be to boost entrepreneurial skills and innovation. A further fundamental requirement is a structured exchange of best practises through placements or visits of Young Farmers across Europe.

“Farming is a complex business demanding management skills and continuous update that can only be achieved through intensive and appropriate training and exchange programmes”. (PT)

“The future of our agriculture will largely depend on policies assuring continuous training and exchange of know-how. Placements abroad are key”. (BE)

“Applicants to installation and investment aid should participate in trainings and exchange programmes”. (ET)

“We are interested in a new appropriate approach in training, paying attention to entrepreneurial skills and an increasing level of knowledge”. (DE, IT)

“The earnest of a dynamic agricultural development is the lifelong learning and the young farmers’ continuous training”. (HU)
Diversification of products and processes and multi-functionality is one of the main features of the future agriculture, as a good alternative to manage globalisation, to facilitate a sustainable rural development and to faster competitiveness.

“It is more and more important to invest in diversification of products in order to stay competitive in the future”. (EL)

“Farmers cultivating small farms need to concentrate on multi-functionality”. (HU)

“Diversification is another farm income, feasible especially when efficiency of our production is growing”. (FI)

“We perform a good balance between producing goods and providing social and environmental services, such as countryside management, nature and cultural traditions conservation”. (LU, PT)
Innovation is another key tool for a successful European Model of Farming, in line with consumers’ demands, sustainable development and competitiveness. New products and services, bioenergy, innovative processing and distribution... are our future!

“Innovation is a pre-requisite for staying ahead of the competition. It requires high quality research and a fast transition of research into practical applications”. (BE)

“Some Young Farmers work on innovative production niches and propose new channels of food products”. (ET)

“Hungary can now be considered as a driver and a motor for innovation in the new EU Member States. Mr Papp’s innovative and good use of European CAP support exemplifies a modern, future-orientated European Agriculture based on innovative transformation and distribution in the agricultural sector”

Giacomo Ballari, CEJA President after the nomination of Peter Papp, Hungarian, as the European innovative Young Farmer 2006

“Decision makers should assure financial aid for the promotion of renewable energies to ensure constant reduction of fossil fuel energy”. (ES)
Young Farmers are ready to face the challenges of globalization and liberalization of international markets. To do this successfully, Young Farmers need:

- Identification of the local origin of food products on labelling
- A clear agricultural export strategy to make better use of the opportunities offered by the global market.
- Support by EU institutions to agri-enterprises by:
  - Strengthening diversities and local specificities
  - Showing the value of the multiple roles and functions of agriculture
  - Supporting territories and local economies in this new context.

“We have to be able to compete with local products in a global world.” (LU)

“The more liberal world market offers new perspectives. With the right support, we can seize these chances.” (BE)

“Our European Model of Agriculture needs to be defended even more at international level by European, national, region and local authorities.” (BE)