Citizens' summary

EU review of the CAP school milk, fruit and vegetable schemes

WHY DO WE NEED A REFORM?

The European Union currently runs 2 schemes under the common agricultural policy (CAP) to improve schoolchildren's consumption of selected agricultural products: the School Milk Scheme, which supplies dairy products, and the School Fruit Scheme, which co-funds the distribution of fruit and vegetable produce. There is now a need for reform to:

- enable these schemes to play an effective role in reversing the ongoing decline in the consumption of fruit, vegetables and dairy products and in reducing obesity among children
- strengthen links between schoolchildren and farming, farmers and the various types of food they produce
- focus these schemes on boosting the consumption of selected produce in the long term and instilling healthy eating habits through education
- make them more efficient, through better targeting for maximum impact and more cost-effective distribution

WHAT EXACTLY WILL CHANGE?

- A joint legal and financial framework will be set up, focusing EU support on the distribution of fresh fruit (including bananas) and vegetables, and drinking milk.
- Distribution will be backed up by educational measures to improve pupils' awareness of farming, the variety of farm produce available, healthy eating habits and environmental issues.
- Funding rules will be changed, enabling the schemes to maximise their impact within a set budget.
- Implementation rules and requirements will be simplified.

WHO WILL BENEFIT AND HOW?

- **Schoolchildren** - from improved arrangements and stronger supporting educational measures
- **Schools** – thanks to simpler rules and lighter organisational burdens
- **EU governments and authorities** – from greater efficiency in managing and implementing the schemes, enabling them to focus their resources more effectively
- **Suppliers and producers** – thanks to new market opportunities and links with schools and pupils

WHY DOES ACTION HAVE TO BE TAKEN BY THE EU?

Consumption of fruit, vegetables and milk continues to fall across the EU, exacerbated by modern trends towards consuming highly processed foods. At the same time, childhood obesity is common in the EU.

Implementing EU-wide initiatives to combat these negative trends calls for funding which can best be provided within an EU framework. Most individual EU countries are not in a position to implement such wide-reaching initiatives using their own resources alone.
The benefits of an EU-wide approach are that it will help spread knowledge and experience among the countries taking part, with participants developing an awareness of what is going on in other countries, and that the process will continue over a considerable period of time.

**WHEN IS THE PROPOSAL LIKELY TO COME INTO EFFECT?**

The new legal and financial framework will probably take effect in 2016.