



# Q&A: Farm to Fork strategy

## Why do we need a Farm to Fork strategy?

The new “Farm to fork” strategy, to be proposed by the Commission as part of the Green Deal, will enable the EU to make a real contribution to sustainability goals and will allow us to address the important challenges faced by our food systems. In 2050, the world’s population is projected to reach nearly 10 billion and we therefore need to ensure all these people have sufficient access to safe, affordable and nutritious food. While the transition to more sustainable food systems has started, feeding a fast-growing world population remains a challenge with current production patterns. Food production results in air, water and soil pollution, contributes to the loss of biodiversity, climate change and resource depletion. Food waste is at an unacceptable level: currently, we waste about 20% of the food produced in the EU (at the same time, every second day, 36 million citizens cannot afford a quality meal). Obesity is also a growing concern with over half the EU’s adult population is now overweight, contributing to a high prevalence of diet-related diseases and related health care costs.

## What will be the issues tackled by Farm to Fork?

The European union has committed to lead on the Sustainable Development Goals, however major changes are needed for us to be able to deliver. It is clear: a new, healthier, fairer and more sustainable approach to food systems is needed. Business as usual is no longer an option. Challenge is wide since we’re talking about environmental, health and economic issues. The Farm to Fork Strategy will contribute to Europe’s climate change agenda, protect the environment and preserve biodiversity. It will ensure farmer’ and fishers’ position in the value chain. It will also encourage sustainable food consumption and promote affordable and healthy food for all.

## Will Farm to Fork take into account the citizens’ concerns?

Citizens in the EU today enjoy a high level of food safety standards and our food safety system is recognised as an example of a global best practice. Citizens however, are more and more concerned about the food they eat, the impact of diet on health and expect transparency notably about the methods of food production, its origin, nutritional value and the quality of what they have on their plates. They want to get transparent information through clear labelling and accessible information. The Farm to Fork strategy will pay particular attention to transparency across the entire supply

chain so that citizens can be sure that they are buying “healthy food from a healthy planet”. The strategy will also take action on specific areas such as pesticides and fertilisers which are of major concern for our citizens.

## What is the environmental impact of food production?

A recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report on “Climate change and Land” stresses it will be impossible to keep global temperatures at safe levels unless there is a transformation in the way the world produces food and manages land. It is estimated that, in the EU, agriculture alone is responsible for approximately 11% of EU greenhouse gas emissions. The IPCC report estimates that globally, 25 – 30% of total greenhouse gas emissions are attributable to the food system.” Also processing, transportation and other food-related activities greatly contribute to pollution of air, soil and water and greenhouse gas emissions.

## Will Farm to Fork also deal with the economic dimension of food production?

Yes: the food supply system is characterised by a process where production is concentrated in specific areas. Also income in agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture lags behind those of other sectors. Consequence of this is for instance the abandonment of difficult-to-farm areas. The use of more sustainable practices could also be hampered because these are often more costly. The Farm to Fork strategy will be supporting Europe’s farmers and fishers and will contain proposals to improve their position in the value chain. It will preserve their vital work and continue ensuring their livelihoods, including through research and innovation. Sustainability cannot be achieved without our food producers coming fully on board.

## How will the Farm to Fork Strategy be carried out?

In terms of timeline, the new ‘Farm to Fork’ strategy will be put forward by the Commission in Spring 2020. On the scope, it will address each and every step of the food chain, from production and processing, through to marketing, consumption and international trade. The goal of the strategy is to change the way we produce and consume, without compromising on the safety, quality and affordability of food. The Commission will extensively consult with producers and other food business operators, citizens, NGOs and other stakeholders to get the balance right, and Member States' support to deliver it.

