Integrated approach from farm to fork needed

Different levels of governance

Multiple instruments:
- Legislation and regulation
- Financial incentives
- Education
- Research and Innovation
- Procurement
- Voluntary commitments
Actions to stimulate sustainable practices by food industry and retail, hospitality and food service

- Set **nutrient profiles** to restrict promotion of food high in salt, sugar or fat (2022)
- Proposal revision EU legislation on **Food Contact Materials** (food safety, environmental footprint) (2022)
- Revision **EU marketing standards** for agricultural, fishery and aquaculture products (ensure uptake and supply of sustainable products (2021-22))
- Enhance coordination to tackle **Food Fraud** (2021-2022)

- Initiative to improve the **corporate governance framework** (integrate sustainability into corporate strategies) (2021)
- Develop an EU code and monitoring framework for **responsible business and marketing conduct** in the food supply chain (2021)
- Stimulate **reformulation** of processed food, including setting of **maximum levels for certain nutrients** (2021)
Actions to promote shift towards healthy, sustainable diets

Determine the best modalities for setting minimum mandatory criteria for sustainable food procurement (2021)

Review of the EU school scheme legal framework: refocus on healthy and sustainable food (2023)

Review of the EU promotion programme for agricultural and food products (aimed at sustainable production and consumption) (2020)

Proposal VAT rates (currently being discussed in Council): could allow to make more targeted use of rates (e.g. to support organic fruit and vegetables).

Proposal for a harmonised mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling to enable consumers to make health conscious food choices (2022)

Proposal to require origin indication for certain products. (2022)

Proposal for a sustainable food labelling framework to empower consumers to make sustainable food choices (2024)
Topics & aspirational goals Code of Conduct based on:

International agreements and conventions, such as:

- UN Sustainable Development Goals
- ‘Paris’ target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Biodiversity (CBD): Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, 2011-2020

EU policy documents, amongst other Green Deal ambitions:

- Farm to Fork Strategy
- Biodiversity Strategy
- 2030 Climate Target Plan

Other relevant input:

- Existing guidelines, good practices
- Input from stakeholders
The EU Code of Conduct: objectives

• To stimulate the uptake of healthy and sustainable consumption patterns
• To foster further improvement of internal processes, operations and organization
• To facilitate the uptake of sustainable practices by all relevant actors in the food system
The EU Code of Conduct: Scope

• Focus on actions by actors of the ‘middle of the food chain: food processors, food service operators and retailers
• Encourage voluntary actions which improve their sustainability performances with spill-over effects on both sides of the chain i.e. primary producers & consumers
• Address the 3 pillars: environmental, economic and social sustainability;
• Shift the norm for food business culture towards sustainability whilst guaranteeing fair and transparent competition;
• Provide clarity and build additional trust among all food system actors;
• Involve all, especially SMEs; and
• Promote front-runner solutions.
The EU Code of Conduct: Process

- Co-design involving:
  - “Middle of the chain”: operators and associations
  - Primary producers: e.g. farmers and fisher associations
  - Consumer representatives
  - NGOs, experts and academia
  - EU Member States

- Takes into account existing work and existing legislation and policies
- Builds on best examples (e.g. industry codes, existing national and international work)
The EU Code of Conduct: Process

• Four different Task Forces set up:
  • Promote healthy and sustainable consumption patterns
  • Improve sustainability of internal processes in the middle of the chain
  • Improve sustainability of the food value chain
  • Cross-cutting: monitoring framework
• Parallel track with individual companies
• Result: two components
  • Aspirational objectives with concrete actions
  • Quantitative commitments by individual companies
Two components in Code of Conduct

Component 1 = general part Code

Aspirational objectives

- Specific actions that can be practically adopted by all actors
- Go beyond current legal obligations and existing voluntary codes
- Minimizing administrative burden, especially for SMEs

Determine actions that contribute to aspirational objectives

Monitor adherence to code

Component 2 = specific part Code for individual companies

Selected targets + monitoring framework

Freedom for companies how to reach targets

Monitor progress (outcome)

Commission will monitor overall effect F2F (incl. Code)
Purpose of aspirational objectives

- Non-binding objectives
- Objectives will show for which themes change is needed, and how much;
- The actions included in the Code should be proportional to the aspirational objectives;
- Overall objectives, in many cases other policies and developments will contribute (for example climate policy, CAP, CFP etc)
- Objectives may help to build an intervention logic and show which actor can contribute
- Objectives will provide guidance for concrete commitments by individual companies (second component).
- Objectives are often thematic, actions might be more integrated (for example synergies between health and environment)
- Objectives will create link to monitoring
- Strive for limited number of objectives (but: food is complex)
Potential aspirational objectives - Health

- Increase the consumption of whole-grain cereals, fruits and vegetables, nuts, pulses and fibres;
- Reduce the average caloric intake, especially that of people who are now overconsuming.
- Lower the consumption of fat, sugar and salt.
- The consumption of red and/or processed meat needs to be in line with recommendations. The ratio between animal-based and plant-based proteins should shift.
- Special attention is needed to prevent childhood obesity
- Adapting marketing and advertising strategies

See for example Food & Agriculture Roadmap – Chapter on Healthy and Sustainable Diets WBCSD / FresH
Potential aspirational objectives - Environment

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from EU food system in 2030, mainly by consumption side measures
- Reduce the environmental footprint food consumption also by mainly by consumption side measures;
- Improve biodiversity, sustainable use of natural capital
- Halving per capita food waste at retail and consumer levels by 2030 (SDG Target 12.3)
- Contribute to Farm-to-Fork and Biodiversity strategy targets (reduction use and risk of pesticides and sales of antimicrobials; increase share of land under organic farming)
Potential aspirational targets – social and economic

Contribute to:
• Ensuring a sustainable livelihood for producers
• Fairer economic returns in the supply chain
• Ensuring access to a sufficient supply of affordable food for citizens

Animal welfare:
• Improved animal welfare. Synergies with amongst others reduction of use of antimicrobials
Challenges

• Co-design: a key for success but a demanding process
• Diversity of actors involved: EU associations, operators (multinational & SMEs), consumers, etc.
• Scope: the whole middle of the chain & all major aspects of sustainability (economic, social and environmental)
• Ambition: voluntary concrete commitments to be monitored
• Time constraints: June 2021
Resources: useful links


• Farm to Fork Strategy: https://ec.europa.eu/food/farm2fork_en


For healthy people, healthy societies and a healthy planet.

The Farm to Fork Strategy

IT’S DOWN TO US!