

TASK FORCE ON SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND INNOVATION

Expert Committee Meeting

On the Ground: A Discussion with European Farmers

2nd of March, 14:00 – 17:20 CET

Virtual Meeting

Programme

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Farmers will be at the centre of the challenges posed by climate change and the loss of biodiversity. Meeting the goals of the Farm to Fork Strategy (F2F) and the Green Deal will require fundamental changes in many sectors of the economy, but especially, agriculture. Farming and rural communities must be the beneficiaries of these changes, not just those burdened by their costs.

For this reason, Re-Imagine Europa (RIE) is convening a meeting of its Task Force on Sustainable Agriculture and Innovation that will see the participation of European farmers from a diversity of backgrounds, practising different forms of agriculture. The main objective is to consider the aims of the F2F Strategy. What impediments must be overcome in order to achieve them? Most importantly, what will be the role of innovation in this process? Innovation can in this context be understood to include, without being limited to, advances in robotics, digital technologies and genetics.

New agricultural methods and technologies will not change our environmental impact unless they are seen as attractive by farmers. Likewise, new policies, however carefully conceived, will not solve the problems we face if at their core there is no understanding of the needs and values that organise the lives of those who grow our food.

WEDNESDAY 2nd OF MARCH PROGRAMME

PLENARY SESSION I

- 14:00-14:05 **WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING**
- Erika Widegren
Chief Executive of Re-Imagine Europa
- Peter Kearns
Event Chair, Special Advisor to Re-Imagine Europa
- 14:05-14:20 **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS: State of Play, Narratives, and the Future**
- Andrzej Nowak
Chief Narrative Scientist, Re-Imagine Europa
- 14:20-14:35 **KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Agriculture and the European Green Deal: Facing the Reality of Climate Change**
- Irene Tolleret
Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Regional Development
- 14:35-14:50 **FIRST PLENARY DISCUSSION: A Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system**
- The Chair will briefly outline the main objectives of the Farm to Fork Strategy, before inviting participants to give their perspective on best practices. The emphasis of this preliminary discussion is to introduce the subject and identify possible areas of disagreement.*
- 14:50-15:00 **Coffee break**

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

- 15:00-16:20 **DEEP-DIVE: A discussion with European farmers**
- Armed with targets, participants will split into working groups and a facilitator will explain the rules of engagement for the discussion. The major questions to be considered are the following:*
- *What do farmers need to achieve the targets set out in the Farm to Fork Strategy?*
 - *How can policymakers help farmers in their endeavours?*
- A designated rapporteur will make note of the main points raised by all sides.*

16:20-16:25 **Coffee break**

PLENARY SESSION II

16:25-17:10 **SECOND PLENARY DISCUSSION: Conclusions and next steps**

Participants will reconvene to discuss the outcomes from each of the working groups. The Chair will first invite a Rapporteur from each group to summarise the views expressed in their Breakout Session, before initiating a broad discussion.

17:10-17:20 **CLOSING REMARKS**

Ms Hilde Crevits, Flemish minister of Economy, Innovation, Work, Social economy and Agriculture will give a pre-recorded video address to close the discussion