How to secure a sustainable future for the EU livestock sector in light of the need to ensure food security, farmers' resilience and the challenges posed by animal diseases?

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The European Parliament adopted by 426 votes to 119, with 40 abstentions, a resolution on how to secure a sustainable future for the EU livestock sector in light of the need to ensure food security, farmers' resilience and the challenges posed by animal diseases?

General remarks

Parliament welcomed the Commission's initiative, in its Vision for Agriculture and Food, to set up a workstream on livestock, supporting targeted and territorial solutions to boost competitiveness while addressing climate, environmental, animal welfare, food security and disease management. It called for a **high-level group on livestock** bringing together key stakeholders, and stressed the need for a coordinated, multidimensional approach that reflects the sector's economic, environmental and social importance without creating trade-offs.

The Commission is called on to provide a **stable and predictable framework** for farmers by **limiting unnecessary regulatory burdens** and **simplifying livestock rules**, especially for small-scale and family farms, thereby facilitating operations and supporting the sector's development.

The resolution pointed out that improving the social, economic and environmental sustainability of livestock farming depends on a long-term vision addressing a broad and interconnected range of factors, including price and non-price competitiveness, the capacity to adapt to climate change and related extreme weather events, and animal diseases.

In general, Parliament stressed the need for increased **transparency** in the allocation and **use of EU funds** to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in order to prevent any risk of misuse or undue influence on EU policies. A **public register** should be established specifying the amount and purpose of funding received by NGOs.

Economic sustainability and food security

Parliament called for a balanced approach recognising the role of animal products in nutrition and farm income, while ensuring food security and reducing environmental impact through science and innovation. It stressed improving productivity, resilience and sustainability to boost the EU's supply of high-quality protein amid global market volatility and rising demand, and welcomed plans for a more **self-sufficient** and sustainable EU protein system.

Moreover, Parliament called on the Commission to both strengthen crisis management tools and increase the agricultural crisis reserve in the post-2027 CAP and combine it with the creation of new specific financial instruments funded from outside the CAP. It is noted that livestock farming systems could take advantage of practices and technologies that can be used to improve animal health and welfare and also use new **digital technologies** to improve animal and system management, data processing and traceability.

Environmental sustainability

The Commission is invited, *inter alia*, to:

- propose tools to enhance the role of livestock production in maintaining grasslands that are important for the environment and climate stability through more efficient farming systems;

- increase the scope for Member States to support farmers in preserving landscape via the CAP, while reducing regulatory obstacles to the full use of pastures and ensuring stronger protection of EU agricultural land against land take, degradation and competing non-agricultural uses;

- support the use of animal manure on certain crops and accelerate the approval and uptake of alternative fertilising products, such as digestate and RENURE materials, to enhance nutrient recycling, reduce dependency on synthetic fertilisers imported from non-EU countries and promote circularity within livestock systems;

- ensure fair prices or due compensation for breeders, given the increasing cost of fertilisers and to invest in innovation and infrastructure that enable the broader use of manure-derived fertilisers and biogas from livestock farming.

Animal diseases

Parliament called for stronger monitoring and prevention to limit the spread of animal diseases within the EU, including a systematic assessment of biosafety risks, particularly at entry pathways. It urged the Commission and Member States to provide adequate resources for prevention and control, enhance rapid alert mechanisms and support research. Members highlighted the potential of Differentiating Infected from Vaccinated Animals (DIVA) vaccines and called for updated rules to reflect new scientific advances. They also stressed cooperation with regional authorities and farmers on prevention and vaccination strategies, while **minimising the need for culling**.

Trade aspects

Stressing that the EU's livestock sector is particularly vulnerable to diverse external shocks as well as increasing competition from non-EU countries, Parliament emphasised the need to ensure equitable competition conditions on the international market to protect the economic viability of European undertakings and guarantee reciprocal standards in trade agreements. It called for the creation of a special instrument within the next multiannual financial framework that would provide targeted support for agricultural sectors, including the livestock sector, that could experience disruptions or require adjustments as a result of the effects of ongoing trade agreements. The Commission should also carry out strict controls on imports to protect domestic producers and EU consumers.