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#### NOTE

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and EU Commissioner for Agriculture during the International Dairy Cooperatives Forum (8 September 2022, Białystok) <i>- Information from the Polish delegation</i>

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Delegations will find in the Annex a document on the above subject to be presented by the Polish delegation under "Any other business" at the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council on 26 September 2022.

**Information on the meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and EU Commissioner for Agriculture during the International Dairy Cooperatives Forum on 8 September in Białystok**

Ministers of Agriculture of Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary met on 8 September 2022 r. in Białystok, during the 19<sup>th</sup> International Dairy Cooperatives Forum. The purpose of the meeting was to strengthen the cooperation among the countries of our region at a time of war in Ukraine and economic crisis. The strengthened regional cooperation is expected to ensure a better identification of common problems and challenges in the dairy sector and to make it possible to more effectively cope with these challenges as well as present common positions at EU level in matters important for milk producers and processors in the countries of our region.

The main topic of both the ministerial meeting and the 19<sup>th</sup> International Dairy Cooperatives Forum was ensuring food security in the EU and in the world in the context of the war in Ukraine.

The Ministers discussed the chances and challenges related to ensuring food security, stressing the need to adapt to climate change, shift to sustainable production and take into account the expectations of consumers. The Ministers agreed that it was necessary to build food sovereignty, make the EU independent from imports and to support the dairy sector in our countries.

The meeting ended with the signing of the Joint Declaration of the Ministers of Agriculture of Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia on the opportunities and challenges facing the dairy sector in ensuring food security when adapting to the requirements of sustainable production and climate change (Annex 1).



MINISTRY OF  
**AGRICULTURE AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Joint declaration of the Ministers of Agriculture  
of Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia  
on the opportunities and challenges facing the dairy sector  
in ensuring food security when adapting to the requirements of sustainable  
production and climate change**

**Białystok, 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2022**

The Ministers of Agriculture of Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia:

CONSIDER that food production is a strategic task and therefore ensuring safe and nutritious food and continuity of its supply must be one of the European Union's priorities, accurately reflected in policies, including the new Common Agricultural Policy and related implementation documents.

ARE AWARE that achieving this objective is a big challenge, taking into account both ongoing climate change resulting in an increasing number of extreme weather conditions such as devastating droughts, fires, frosts, strong winds, floods, soil erosion and the resulting spread of animal and plant diseases, as well as the disruption of global markets caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the war close to EU borders.

AGREE that the production of milk and milk products is of utmost importance for the EU's agri-food economy and, being grounded by centuries of tradition, is also an important medium of our culture.

IDENTIFY several challenges and tasks facing the dairy sector linked to the ambitious goals set out in, *inter alia*, the European Green Deal strategy combating climate change, to the rising production costs, increasing competition from third countries as a result of trade liberalisation, and changes in consumer trends due to all these factors.

HIGHLIGHT that ambitious objectives of the European Green Deal and targets of different initiatives that do not take into account the objective situation in different Member States, may lead to a reduction of the European Union's share in the global food production, including dairy products, and transfer of this production to regions with lower environmental requirements than those set by the EU.

ARE CONCERNED that the costs of these changes will be borne by EU dairy producers and processors, as well as consumers of dairy products, with a consequent risk of weakening the competitive position of the EU dairy sector on the international market and, in extreme cases, of making the EU dependent on dairy imports.

UNDERLINE that the implementation of ambitious targets must not constitute an excessive, one-sided burden on the EU agriculture and food industry. Therefore, we consider that a flexible approach based on the principle of equity is necessary when implementing EU norms and requirements, which should take into account particularities of Member States and EU regions.

SEE THE NEED for the implementation of instruments that promote high EU standards of sustainable food production and applying them to food imported to the Community market.

EU agri-food products should not be discriminated in relation to imports of agri-food products from third countries that do not meet high EU standards.

STRESS the need to support generational change in the countryside and in agriculture, by paying more attention to young farmers and the use of new technologies, that guarantees the continuity of production and stability of food supply.

EMPHASIZE the need for correct and balanced information to the public/consumers about the properties of milk and milk products and their impact on human nutrition.

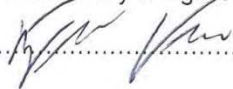
for the Ministry of Rural Affairs:

Estonia:

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for the Ministry of Agriculture:

Hungary:

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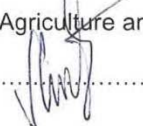
for the Ministry of Agriculture:

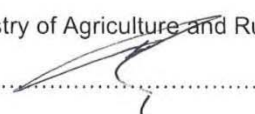
Latvia:

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Lithuania: for the Ministry of Agriculture:  
.....*Egidijus Grechaitis*.....

Poland: for the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development:  
.....*Henryk Kowalczyk*.....

Romania: for the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development:  
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Slovakia: for the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development:  
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