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## NOTE

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations

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Subject:	AOB item for the meeting of the “Agriculture and Fisheries” Council on 14 July 2025: Commission’s proposal to allow the use of Recovered Nitrogen from Manure (RENURE) <i>- Information from the Netherlands, supported by Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Luxembourg, Malta, Romania and Spain</i>
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On 19 April 2024 the European Commission proposed to amend the Nitrates Directive to allow the use of certain fertilising materials from livestock manure, including Recovered Nitrogen from Manure (RENURE), that under certain conditions act as ‘chemical fertilisers’. Adoption of the proposal is key for safeguarding our food security by reducing our dependency on imported fertilisers in a way that is more environmentally sustainable, economically profitable and fits in a circular economy. We hope for a swift approval in the Nitrates Committee of September and ask for your support.

Allowing the use of RENURE products will contribute to the open strategic autonomy and competitiveness of the EU. In particular, it decreases dependency on the Russian Federation, which accounts for around one-third of the EU's total imports of fertilisers. With the recently increased tariffs on Russian fertilisers, aimed at cutting this dependency, the urgency has increased even more to find alternatives. Furthermore, RENURE decreases the dependency on fossil fuels needed to produce chemical fertiliser in the EU, thus contributing to the green transition. Both in the Commission's Vision for Agriculture and Food and the Clean Industrial Deal, RENURE is explicitly mentioned as a low-carbon and recycled fertiliser. The Commission's proposal for the use of RENURE is a practical and concrete solution, that offers much needed and immediate relief for farmers. In 2020, the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission set out to define the criteria under which these products can be safely used, with regards to health and the environment, to replace chemical fertilisers. On the basis of this study, the Commission has proposed to allow the use of RENURE, a locally produced sustainable alternative to chemical fertilisers.

The use of RENURE is also supported by several Resolutions of the European Parliament, these include the resolutions of 16 February 2023 on the Commission's communication on ensuring availability and affordability of fertilisers and of 14 June 2023 on ensuring food security and long-term resilience of EU agriculture. Furthermore, in March 2024 the European Council underlined the importance of a resilient and sustainable agricultural sector for food security and the Union's open strategic autonomy. It emphasised that farmers need a stable and predictable framework, including to accompany them in tackling environmental and climate challenges. By approving the proposal on allowing RENURE, we will demonstrate to our agricultural communities that the EU has their best interests at heart and is able to deliver on its promises.

Indeed, the use of livestock manure, digestates, agro-food residues, agricultural by-products and agroforestry material as fertilisers or nutrients, as well as the use of green or blue nitrogen fertilisers, should also be promoted to limit the use of conventional chemical fertilisers, provided that productivity and crop quality are not compromised, and reduce the risk associated to market volatility caused by the geopolitical crisis.