

Questions Confirmation Hearing Hansen

1)

The farmers' protests in the spring were a clear expression of the enormous difficulties faced by farmers. They particularly highlighted the need for a fair income, low profitability of farming due to low producer prices and high input costs, unfair competition from imports from third countries and lack of reciprocity, and the regulatory burden and lack of incentives to meet high environmental standards in agriculture. As farmers are often the weakest link in the food supply chain and their income is structurally below the average of other sectors, what are your ideas for a "Vision on Agriculture and Food" as announced in your mission letter as Commissioner-designate to ensure a fair income for farmers, improve their position in the food supply chain, enhance transparency in price formation, as well as attract young farmers to the sector? How do you plan, in the short and long term, to further alleviate and streamline administrative burden and reporting obligations arising from various policies on farmers?

2)

Mr. Commissioner-designate, what are your views on the implications of enlargement with regard to the future CAP especially the future of direct payments? How do you intend to avoid or mitigate the possible adverse effects of the enlargement process on EU agricultural markets and producers? Do you currently see the need to further regulate the entry of Ukrainian products in order to avoid destabilising EU agricultural markets? Do you consider the protective measures in force since last June to be sufficient? More broadly, what are your views on the current renegotiation of the free trade agreement with Ukraine?

3)

Agriculture is more dependent than almost any other sector on external factors such as climate events, volatile markets or geopolitical circumstances over which it has little or no influence. A resilient agricultural sector and robust crisis management are therefore essential for future agricultural policy. As Commissioner-designate, what are your ideas for improving the resilience and crisis and risk management of the agricultural sector, including the crisis reserve, in light of the above-mentioned external challenges? In particular, how do you plan to deal with water-related challenges, including water availability that are increasingly becoming key issues in agricultural production?

4)

The agricultural sector has made major efforts in recent years and decades, including through targeted support under the CAP, to become more environmentally and climate friendly. Agriculture already makes an important contribution to implementing the EU's climate, biodiversity and environmental targets and it will continue to do so in the future, while taking into account the socio-economic reality, competitiveness and profitability of the agricultural and food sector. How do you intend to support farmers in this necessary process of change? Could this be done within the current CAP framework? Given the need for increased investment to ensure the sustainability of agricultural sector, do you see the need for an increased CAP budget and how would you ensure sufficient funding? What other public and private instruments do you think are needed to support farmers in providing public services?

5)

What are your plans for developing the livestock sector while contributing to the climate action plan? How would you intend to boost innovation in this area? How would you ensure coherent and effective implementation of legislation aimed at reducing emissions affecting livestock sector, and how would you avoid multiple legal layers and additional administrative burden to farmers?

Table Briefings