

Symposium on the Future of Agriculture in the EU

Ghent, Belgium

February 7, 2024

Programme for the day

Below you can find more information about the **programme, keynote speakers and panel members** for the Symposium on the Future of Agriculture in the European Union.

To stay up to date on the programme and speakers, check the event page on [our website](#).

TIMETABLE	
8.30 – 9.10 A.M.	Morning coffee/tea
9.10 – 9.20 A.M.	Welcome and introduction by Mr. Jo Brouns, Minister for Economy, Employment, Innovation and Agriculture (Flemish Government)
9.20 – 9.30 A.M.	Opening speech by Mr. Maroš Šefčovič, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission
9.30 – 10.00 A.M.	Plenary session 1 Theme EU agriculture from a global perspective Keynote speaker: Mr. Guillaume Gruère , Head of Agriculture and Resource Policies Division (OECD)
10.00 – 10.10 A.M.	Q&A session
10.15 – 10.45 A.M.	Plenary session 2 Theme Compatibility between EU trade and agricultural policy

	Keynote speaker: Mr. Phil Hogan , former EU Commissioner for Trade and Agriculture
10.45 – 10.55 A.M.	Q&A session
11.00 – 11.30 A.M.	Plenary session 3 Theme Sustainable development of future animal production Keynote speaker: Professor Frank Mitloehner , University of California
11.30 – 11.40 A.M.	Q&A session
12.00 – 13.30 P.M.	LUNCH
AFTERNOON PROGRAM (into breakout rooms)	Sub program ‘market’
13.30 – 14.00 P.M.	Session 4.A Theme Options for farmers to obtain better remunerations from the market in a competition law perspective. Keynote speaker: Mr. Philippe Chauve , Head of Unit DG COMPETITION (EU Commission)
14.00 – 14.30 P.M.	Session 4.B Theme Importance of generational renewal in family farming. Keynote speaker: Mr. Peter Meedendorp , President of CEJA Young Farmers
14.30 – 14.50 P.M.	Q&A session for both keynote speakers
	Sub program ‘sustainability’
13.30 – 14.00 P.M.	Session 5.A Theme Climate adaptation strategies in agriculture Keynote speaker: Ms. Hanne Søndergaard , Executive Vice-President @Arla Foods
14.00 – 14.30 P.M.	Session 5.B Remuneration of public services of farmers in EU agriculture, state aid and competition law.

	Keynote speakers: Dr. Robert Baayen & Caroline Wolberink (LL.M) , Wageningen Environmental Research & the Authority for Consumers and Markets
14.30 – 14.50 P.M.	Q&A session for both keynote speakers
	Sub program ‘society’
13.30 – 14.00 P.M.	<p>Session 6.A</p> <p>Theme</p> <p>Reconnecting farmers and citizens</p> <p>Keynote speaker: Dr. Jessica Eise, Assistant Professor of Social & Environmental Challenges, University of Texas at San Antonio</p>
14.00 – 14.30 P.M.	<p>Session 6.B</p> <p>Theme</p> <p>The global potential of fermented food</p> <p>Keynote speaker: Mr. David De Schutter, Global VP Innovation & Technology Development@AB InBev</p>
14.30 – 14.50 P.M.	Q&A session for both keynote speakers
15.15 – 15.45 P.M.	BREAK
15.45 – 17.00 P.M.	<p>Panel discussion led by moderator Prof. Dr. Steven Van Hecke (Professor in European Politics at KU Leuven Public Governance Institute).</p> <p>Panel members</p> <p>Mr. Wolfgang Burtscher (Director General, DG AGRI), Mr. Karl Bauer (Chair of the Copa-Cogeca Working Party on the Common Agricultural Policy), Ms. Katrien D’hooghe (Managing Director, Belgian Feed Association BFA), Ms. Patricia De Clercq (Administrator General of the Agency of Agriculture and Sea Fisheries), Ms. Faustine Bas-Defossez (Director for Nature, Health and Environment, the European Environmental Bureau) and Mr. Alex Datema (Food & Agri Director Rabobank)</p>
17.05– 17.15	A word of thanks
17.30 – (...)	Networking reception

Speakers

Guillaume Gruère

Head of Agriculture and Resources Policies Division (OECD)

Guillaume Gruère oversees OECD's work on agricultural and fisheries policies. His division produces the annual flagship report "Agricultural Policy Monitoring and Evaluation" and forward-looking agricultural and food policy reviews in particular jurisdictions, most recently releasing policy reviews on the Netherlands, Spain, and the European Union. He previously led OECD's work on climate change, environmental and resource policies in agriculture, writing reports on agriculture and water policies, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and trade and environment policy issues. Before joining OECD, he was a senior research fellow at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in Washington DC, conducting research on biodiversity, biosafety and international trade policy issues.

M. Gruère has published over 90 peer-reviewed publications, including two articles that received research awards from the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA). He holds a PhD in Agricultural and Resource Economics from the University of California Davis, United States, and a dual MS in environment and natural resource economics and agronomic engineering from AgroParisTech, France.

Phil Hogan

Former EU Commissioner for Agriculture & Rural Development (2014-2019) and Trade (2019-2020)

During that time, he was involved in managing the Common Agriculture Policy and its budget (410 billion euro), opening new market opportunities for food exporters arising from the Russian embargo, assisting in the negotiations of several trade deals with various countries including China, Japan, Vietnam, Singapore, Mexico, Mercosur. He also forged a new relationship with the United States of America in respect of trade and technology. Phil Hogan was a member of the National Parliament of Ireland for 27 years and Minister for Environment & Local Government from 2011 to 2014. He was born in Kilkenny, Ireland and is a graduate of University College, Cork (BA, Econs). Presently, he is Managing Director of a business consultancy firm.

Frank Mitloehner

Professor and air quality specialist at UC Davis

Dr. Frank Mitloehner is a professor and air quality specialist at UC Davis. He is passionate about understanding and mitigating air emissions from livestock. He leads the CLEAR Center, focused on improving sustainability in animal agriculture. Frank received a master's degree in animal science and agricultural engineering from the University of Leipzig, Germany, and a PhD in animal science from Texas Tech University.

Philippe Chauve

European Commission, Head of Unit DG Competition

Philippe is Head of Unit at the Directorate General for Competition of the European Commission. His unit is working on regulatory and antitrust issues in Fast Moving Consumer Goods (food, home care, personal care), agricultural products and agricultural inputs in Europe. The unit has been investigating practices of manufacturers (e.g. AB InBev, Mondelez, Coca-Cola, Red Bull), retailers (alliances Agecore, Coopernic, Casino-Intermarché) and farmers (protectionist agreements in various member states). It also provides guidance on certain agreements (e.g. regarding sustainability agreements in agriculture).

Philippe has extensive experience in antitrust enforcement and merger procedures. Before heading the unit, he was enforcing competition rules in the energy sector, where he carried out a sector inquiry and many antitrust and merger investigations and implemented unprecedented remedies (such as the first large scale divestitures of assets in European antitrust history – sales of power plants and networks). In earlier jobs, he negotiated trade agreements for goods and services in the WTO and between the EU and its trading partners.

Peter Meedendorp

President of CEJA Young Farmers

Peter is a young farmer from The Netherlands. He works in a partnership with his parents and brother on their arable family farm, where they grow starch potatoes, sugar beets, barley, onions, fiber hemp, and corn. They also provide contract work in the dairy sector and are involved in agricultural nature management. Peter has aspirations of taking over the farm fully in the future. With a background in International Relations (Groningen) and Agricultural Economics (Wageningen), along with a passion for farming, he has been actively engaged in national and EU agricultural policy. In 2021, he was appointed to the national board of NAJK.

Hanne Søndergaard

Executive Vice President / Chief Agriculture, Sustainability and Communications Officer of Arla Foods

Hanne is EVP for Agriculture, Sustainability and Communication at Arla Foods. Hanne is the voice of Arla farmers across the world, championing their efforts to be evermore sustainable and driving Arla's innovation in the space through science, research, and data.

Hanne is recognised as a driver of change within the dairy industry, transforming opportunities for more sustainable farming practices into long-term value for farmers, customers, and consumers alike, and she believes that a collaborative, multi stakeholder approach is essential to developing and taking the actions necessary to create sustainable food systems that are good for the planet and capable of feeding a growing global population.

Hanne has been at Arla Foods for more than three decades and in that time, she has worked across marketing, sales, and commercial teams, giving her an all-encompassing view of the cooperative. She is an active industry board member serving as the Deputy Chair at Global Dairy Platform, a board member of the Arla Foundation, the Danish Agriculture and Food Council, The Danish Climate Forest Fund and DTU - Technical University of Denmark.

Food and farming are not only a big part of Hanne's professional life - she grew up on a dairy farm and is a self-confessed foodie who loves to spend hours in the kitchen trying out new recipes and is always on the look-out for new, exciting food experiences.

Robert Baayen

Scientist at Wageningen Environmental Research

Robert Baayen is a scientist at Wageningen Environmental Research, where he researches the interface of policy and legislation as regards agriculture, nature and the sustainability transition. His publications integrate the economic, environmental, societal and legal dimension of the EU Common Agricultural Policy, state aid and competition policy, as well as their implications for national policies. He also authored numerous publications on plant pathology, biosystematics and ecology, in which he has a PhD from Utrecht University.

Apart from a long academic career, Robert Baayen also worked for the Netherlands' Ministry of Agriculture, including as a programme manager for the review of the Common Agricultural Policy. Furthermore, he worked for six years for the European Commission, where he redesigned the EU plant health policy. From the Permanent Representation of the Netherlands, he led the political trilogues concerning the Official Controls Regulation and concluded these with a political agreement.

Caroline Wolberink

Authority for Consumers and Markets, Dutch Government

Since 2018, Caroline Wolberink heads the ACM team monitoring the food supply chain, where she investigates the obstacles for transitioning to circular agriculture and how to overcome these. Together with Wageningen Economic Research, she provided for three in-depth market analyses for advising the Minister of Agriculture in this respect. For almost ten years, she also heads the ACM team developing a policy regarding the application of competition law on sustainability agreements. The ACM is a leader in this field. She coordinated the assessment of sustainability agreements like 'Chicken of Tomorrow' and led the drafting of the ACM guidelines on sustainability agreements and on cooperation in the agricultural sector.

Caroline Wolberink is a frequently invited speaker on national and international stages, published various articles on the application of competition law on sustainability agreements. She started her career as a European law and competition law counsel for almost ten years. In 2005, she joined the Netherlands Competition Authority, which, after a merger with two other regulators, is now known as the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM).

Jessica Eise

Assistant professor of social and environmental challenges at The University of Texas at San Antonio

Dr. Jessica Eise is an assistant professor of social and environmental challenges at The University of Texas at San Antonio and an expert on science communication and agriculture. Her books include *The Communication Scarcity in Agriculture* and *How to Feed the World*.

She speaks regularly to international audiences on how to improve communication between stakeholder groups in agriculture to improve both sustainability and food security.

David De Schutter

Global VP Innovation & Technology Development at AB InBev

Mr. De Schutter graduated as a Master in Bioscience Engineering in 2003 and between 2004-2005, he also worked briefly at a fermentation startup company. He obtained his PhD in Bioscience Engineering in 2008 at KU Leuven, Belgium, with a thesis titled "The influence of wort boiling on the flavour stability of beer".

In 2009, he started at Procter & Gamble as R&D process engineer and, in 2012 he joined AB InBev in the Global Innovation & Technology Center (GITEC) as Product & Process Development Specialist, after which he had several R&D leadership roles. In 2020, he became Global Vice President of Innovation & Technology Development, responsible for R&D at AB InBev globally.

Panel members

Wolfgang Burtscher

Director General of the Directorate-General AGRI (European Commission)

Wolfgang Burtscher has been Director General of DG AGRI since April 2020. From 2009 to 2020, he was Deputy Director General of DG Research and Innovation (responsible for i.a. agriculture, food and health). From 2000 to 2009, he was Director in DG AGRI (responsible for i.a. legal issues, quality policy and the control of agricultural expenditure). Before 2000, he was a representative of the federal states in the Permanent Representation of Austria to the EU.

Faustine Bas-Defossez

Director for Nature, Health and Environment (European Environmental Bureau)

Faustine Bas-Defossez is EEB's Director for Nature, Health and Environment. With more than 15 years of professional experience in EU environmental policy, she is a true environmentalist. As Director for Nature, Health and Environment, she leads a large policy portfolio of the organisation: namely biodiversity, water, soil; agriculture and food; chemicals; mercury and air quality and noise and she is part of the senior management team.

Between 2009 and 2018, she was leading the agriculture work of the EEB. Before re-joining the civil society movement, she spent 5 years in leading roles within the sustainability think tanks' community, as Head of the agriculture and land management program first and then External Impact Director.

At the beginning of her career, she also worked for the European Commission's Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development. Faustine is French, has a master's degree in International and European Law and holds a MSc in European politics from Science Po Strasbourg.

Katrien D'hooghe

Managing Director of BFA, the Belgian Feed Association

Katrien D'hooghe graduated from Ghent University with a Master's Degree in Bioscience Engineering in 2004. From the university, she moved on to the Belgian Dairy Association BCZ-CBL. She also joined the Belgian National Committee of the International Dairy Federation (IDF) in 2006. In 2012, she became Managing Director of Ovocom, the Belgian consultation platform for the animal feed chain. Since 2019, she is Managing Director of BFA, the Belgian Feed Association. Katrien sits in various boards in the animal feed sector and was also elected President of Ovocom this year.

Patricia De Clercq

Administrator General of the Flemish Agency For Agriculture and Sea Fisheries in Belgium

Patricia De Clercq is the Secretary General of the Flemish Department of Agriculture and Fisheries in Belgium. She graduated in bio-science engineering in 1998 and started her career as project manager at Ghent University. After 3 years she started as a policy advisor at the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries – in the next years she worked on several topics and projects and became Head of Division. Before becoming Secretary General in 2018, she was Deputy Chief of Staff for agriculture, fisheries and rural life at the cabinet of the Flemish Minister of Agriculture.

Karl Bauer

Chair of the Copa-Cogeca Working Party on the Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. Bauer represents farmers' interests in the Austrian Chamber for Agriculture and obtained his diploma on the Future of the European Union – Deepening and Enlargement from the University of Natural Resources and Applied Sciences in Vienna. Currently, Mr. Bauer works as Head of division of Agricultural and Regional policy, coordinating agricultural policy activities with a special focus on the CAP. He was even nominated national expert for CAP. Furthermore, Mr. Bauman is Chair of the Copa-Cogeca Working Party on the Common Agricultural Policy.

Alex Datema

Food & Agri Director Rabobank

Alex Datema (56) is Director Food & Agri at Rabobank Nederland. In addition, he has been running a dairy farm with 120 dairy cows and 70 hectares of grassland in Groningen for 35 years together with a business partner. In his current role at the bank, he is committed to drive business engagement to build a sustainable future for agriculture in the Netherlands. In cooperation with Rabobank colleagues, Datema is shaping the bank's agricultural and horticultural policy and the area-oriented approach. Besides that, he is promoting this perspective and policies inside and outside the bank.

Previously, Datema has been working for more than seven years as a chairman of BoerenNatuur, an association that is committed to agricultural nature management and nature-inclusive agriculture. He is a member of the Scientific Council for Integral Sustainable Agriculture and Food and co-initiator of the Dutch Deltaplan for Biodiversity Restoration. At a young age, Datema has been vice-president of the Dutch Agricultural Youth Contact (NAJK) for two years, where he gained his first administrative experience.

Moderator

Steven Van Hecke

Political scientist and Professor in European Politics at KU Leuven Public Governance Institute (Faculty of Social Sciences)

From February until April 2022, Steven Van Hecke was a senior research fellow at the Leibniz-Institut für Europäische Geschichte in Mainz. Since 1 July 2022 he is a non-resident visiting fellow at the European Parliament Research Service. Steven Van Hecke his research agenda is at the intersection of comparative politics, EU studies and political history. Steven Van Hecke is chairman of the KU Leuven Wilfried Martens Fund and the Fund involvEU. From October 2017 until September 2021 he was president of KADOC. He regularly comments on current EU affairs in the Flemish media. He is also active on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.