

Time to Re-Examine the European Common Agricultural Policy

Voice-over 1:

It's an early start for Evald. He's busy tending to his 300 cows on his farm of around 200 hectares. Evald lives and works forty kilometres from Aarhus in a small village on Denmark's Jutland peninsula. He comes from good farming stock following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. However, in 1994 Evald decided to go organic.

Evald Vestergaard (Danish Farmer):

I felt I (have) got to be responsible for more than myself and that's something to do with the nature, the animal health, and about the health for the whole air around myself and my children.

Voice-over 1:

It's a profound change. However, Evald has allies in the form of the Danish government, which for the past twenty years has supported organic farming. Alarm bells sounded at the end of the 80s as the environment began to suffer with a lot of the blame levelled at industrial scale agriculture. The government in Copenhagen believes food production free from pesticides is the way forward as the world tries to combat climatic change, ensure environmental protection and halt the decline in biodiversity.

Ariel Brunner (Birdlife International):

The recent decades we've seen biodiversity decline in agricultural areas, for example farmland birds have declined by almost 50 per cent over the last three decades. We are seeing a huge water crisis gathering, especially in the Mediterranean areas, soil degradation, pollution, very big problems that are still out there and must be faced. We would like to see subsidies reoriented. At the moment most subsidies are essentially wasted because there is no link between what a farmer does and what money he receives.

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