

Press Release

“Wir haben es satt!” alliance: Use the election year to vote out an agricultural policy that is harmful to farmers, animals and the environment

Agriculture change alliance (“We are fed up!”) demands sustainable agriculture policy in Berlin / Footprint Action – ten thousand vote with their feet for farms, animals and the environment

Berlin, 16.01.21. Today in Berlin, around 10,000 people are demanding an agricultural transition to sustainable farming with their footprints. At the opening of super election year, the “Wir haben es satt!” alliance is bringing a sea of footprints to the Federal Chancellery in Berlin (Kanzler*innenamt). The movement for agricultural reforms is demonstrating in conformance with the pandemic for a politics which gives farms, animals and the environment a future. “Vote out the agricultural industry – kick off agricultural change” is the message in front of the official residence of Chancellor Merkel.

Saskia Richartz, “Wir haben es satt!” spokeswoman says on behalf of 60 organisations in the alliance: *“cheap food is a dead end that helps neither agriculture nor consumers. Julia Klöckner is failing as agriculture minister, and is making policies at the cost of farms, animals and the environment. This agricultural policy of the CDU/CSU must be voted out. We demand: stop the loss of family farms, support barn improvements and cut back livestock numbers, phase out pesticides and reject genetic engineering and the EU-Mercosur trade deal.”*

Instead of taking to the streets, around 10,000 people took part – creatively and expressively – in the footprint action from the safety of their homes: countless foot and boot prints, as well as tractor tracks have been sent to Berlin with demands. “Save insects”, “small and family-sized farms instead of agricultural deserts”, “choose manure on the shoe instead of CDU” or “freedom of movement, also for pigs” are some of the messages. Particularly spectacular: one family from Hamburg has sent demands for agricultural change from four generations – aged 3 to 93 years of age.

Ahead of the protest, a delegation of farmers with their tractors and vented their anger at 15 years failed CDU/CSU agriculture policy at a rally in front of the CDU headquarters.

Sandra Finke-Neuendorf, farmer from Blankenfelde near Berlin who rode in the tractor convoy said: *“dumping prices, climate crisis and species extinction compel us all to make changes. We farmers are ready to make our contribution. We expect that minister Klöckner finally provides the necessary framework. Fair producer prices and a serious system change in agricultural policy are imperative.”*

Background

In the “Wir haben es satt!” alliance, conventional and organic farmers protest alongside civil society against the fatal consequences of intensive industrial agriculture. Collectively, the alliance demonstrates ways for a sustainable, rural agriculture, which offers more protection for the environment, animals and the climate – thereby meeting the demands of the public, as well as offering sound economic perspectives for farmers

www.wir-haben-es-satt.de

Photos from the protest available from around 1pm in printable quality at www.wir-haben-es-satt.de/presse

Press Contact

Christian Rollmann

„Wir haben es satt!“-Press officer

Tel.: 030-28482438, Mobile: 0151-51245795

E-Mail: presse@meine-landwirtschaft.de

Statements from Speakers

Gottfried Erves, Bio farmer and national speaker of Biokreis

“We are standing at a turning point. Politics must now take the correct steps so that us farmers can protect the climate, biodiversity and healthy soil. One thing is clear: only sustainable agriculture is future-proof!”

Lena Bassermann from INKOTA

“We require fair, healthy and sustainable nutrition systems now – and worldwide. This is why we call on politicians to stop the poisonous exports! If a pesticide substance is banned in Europe because it harms people or the environment, why it’s export permitted? We need an end to double standards in pesticide marketing and a lasting ban of exports”.

Elisabeth Fresen, suckler cow farmer and national chair of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft bäuerliche Landwirtschaft (working group of rural agriculture, AbL)

“Today, we are bringing the protests of previous weeks for fair producer prices to Berlin. Farmers, together with society, demand a different agricultural politics from minister Klöckner. We need a market crisis instrument for fair prices, qualified international trade, agricultural payments based on the public interest and access to the countryside for start-ups.”

Cengiz Jiménez Laux from Yeşil Çember:

“How can profit be more important than people’s health? We urgently need a target for the total amount of pesticide residues that are allowed on our food. Let combine our voices and vote out profit-orientated agricultural industry.”

Jörg-Andreas Krüger, president of the Naturschutzbund Deutschland (German member of Birdlife International, NABU)

“Last year failed to kick start the agriculture transition, because the EU’s common agricultural policy reform failed at European level. Now, Germany must maximise the space for nature and biodiversity in its national implementation of the EU ‘s agricultural policy and ensure that farmers are adequately rewarded for ecological services.”

Olaf Brandt, president of the Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland (federation for the environment and conservation in Germany, BUND)

“Low prices make it difficult for farmers to respond to society’s demand for more environment protection and animal welfare. Minister Klöckner must change course politically and implement the recommendation of her own competence network on livestock farming. This is the only way that responsible livestock farming can achieve a reliable financial baseline.”

Reinhild Benning from the Deutschen Umwelthilfe (German environment help, DUH)

“Antibiotic resistance in every second chicken from poultry enterprises like Wiesenhof pose a massive health risk. The only people we should vote for are those who implement laws which put the health of people and animals above business interests.”

Thomas Schröder, President Deutscher Tierschutzbund (German society for the protection of cruelty to animals)

“Our fight against a system which is hostile to animals continues – despite Corona. We will use the super election year to show: Only those who join us in demanding a systemic change in the agricultural industry should enter Parliament. There can and must not be a ‘Carry on as before’.”

Anke Kähler, master baker and board member of Die Freien Bäcker (free bakers)

“With the action BODEN-BROT (bread for soils), we are drawing attention to the loss of soil and soil fertility. Land and soil belong in the hands of farmer, so they can protect and regenerate humus. Only if the farmers are fairly rewarded for soil protection, can we offer a wide choice of bread – because that in turn needs diversity of life in and on the ground.”

Rüdiger Jürgensen, Managing director, VIER PFOTEN Deutschland (four paws Germany)

“The current agricultural politics lead to a dead end. The victims are the animals, the environment and the farmers themselves. It is no longer sufficient to tinker with the edges of reform. We require a 180 degree transition in agriculture and livestock farming. Fewer animals, a happy life for every animal and an end to the disastrous focus on exports.”

Johann Lütke Schwienhorst, beekeeper and agricultural consultant of the Aurelia foundation

“In the case of authorisation of neonicotinoids, minister Klöckner once more sits on the side of economic interests of agribusiness instead of the urgently needed protection of bees and biodiversity and the interests of beekeepers. Anyone who harms bees in this way deserves to be voted out.”