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European Landowners' Organization reacts to the European Commission's Vision for Agriculture and Food

Brussels, February 19, 2025 — The European Landowners' Organization (ELO) welcomes the publication of the European Commission's Communication, A Vision for Agriculture and Food: Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations. Despite being strongly based on the Strategic Dialogue report, the document is much more concise and with improved aspects. Like the report, it contains numerous goals and actions that should be reflected in current budget discussions.

The ELO commends the Commission's strong emphasis on competitiveness in the agri-food sector and the recognition that decarbonisation and competitiveness go hand in hand. A competitive agricultural sector is essential for ensuring food security, economic prosperity, and the long-term viability of farming in Europe. We support measures that value the land-based sectors' contribution to a carbon-neutral bioeconomy.

The ELO supports the Commission's efforts to rebalance the food chain and ensure fairer income distribution for farmers. The proposed revision of the Unfair Trading Practices (UTP) Directive and the establishment of the Agrifood Chain Observatory are welcomed steps toward creating a more equitable and transparent market. While these attempts are positive, they are insufficient to deal with the structural problems that lead to EU farmer's weaker position in the value chain.

The Vision is broader than the Common Agricultural Policy, which is the essential tool for the land-based sectors, providing an important cushion for climate and other outside pressures. It should continue focusing on producing better (with a better environmental footprint and being

more profitable) and move away from a segregated view of land management. We encourage the Commission to explore approaches that better target support without undermining strategic autonomy. Actions related to other parts of the food chain should be dealt with outside of the CAP.

We welcome the emphasis on simplifying regulatory frameworks and reducing administrative burdens, which will enable farmers to focus on sustainable practices. While the proposed initiative of benchmarking is based on a commendable goal, it lacks the details that show its potential to be effective. Among simplification initiatives, the proposed policy action on biocontrol stands out as a necessary development in ensuring a wider toolbox for European farmers. We look forward to its swift implementation.

Initiatives such as carbon farming, nature credits, and the promotion of renewable energy production are expected to recognise farmers' wider contribution to society, including goals of carbon neutrality and the environment. European landowners welcome them. We also welcome the establishment of an EU Observatory on Farmland. It can be a positive step to increase information and transparency, which is an important basis to improve land mobility.

While the ELO supports the overall direction, we urge the Commission to ensure that the proposed actions are implemented in a way that respects the diversity of farming systems and climates across Europe. As the Communication rightly acknowledges, there is no one-size-fits-all solution for European agriculture.

The ELO looks forward to engaging in the dialogue launched by the Commission and contributing to the development of policies that will shape the future of European agriculture. We believe that by working together, we can build a thriving, sustainable, and resilient agri-food sector that benefits farmers, rural communities, and society as a whole.

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About the European Landowners' Organization (ELO)

The European Landowners' Organization (ELO) is a leading voice representing the interests of landowners, rural entrepreneurs, and rural land managers in Europe. ELO promotes sustainable land management practices, fosters innovation, and advocates for the recognition of landowners' crucial role in shaping Europe's landscapes and rural areas.

