



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**Dacian Cioloș**

European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development

**Speech: The CAP and research facing the challenges ahead**

Check Against Delivery  
Seul le texte prononcé fait foi  
Es gilt das gesprochene Wort

INRA's Conference at the Agricultural Fair / Paris  
**26 February 2013**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I shall not be at the Agricultural Fair of Paris this year, but thank you for giving me the opportunity to take part indirectly in the conference by means of this video.

This year the Fair celebrates its 50th anniversary. It has been held for as long as the Common Agricultural Policy has existed. Throughout this time, research has profoundly transformed the farming industry; and the farming industry has continually posed new challenges for research.

Looking to the future, the challenges that lie ahead for agricultural research mean that it must be both more disciplined and more open at the same time. The issues have become more complex. There is no longer just one variable – security of food supply – but multiple variables: the environment as well as economic, social and regional issues.

The links between productivity, environmental sustainability, the distribution of income throughout the food chain, health issues and a whole number of other variables mean that complex approaches are needed.

The number of farmers is dwindling. Although good prices are sometimes achieved, incomes are not keeping up. Life is still difficult in some regions and sectors. I am thinking in particular of livestock breeding. Production is tending to concentrate in the most productive areas and in areas with the easiest access routes.

All these factors are challenges for the CAP and for research.

The CAP will evolve and will come up with new answers. It will ensure that there is more support for research so that solutions can be found.

Let me say a few words about the reform of the CAP.

The budget issue has been clarified. The budget is still substantial and will enable us to have a genuine common policy. I now hope that agreement with the European Parliament and the Member States will be reached by the summer.

What we must achieve is a CAP that is fairer and better targeted. But you cannot just abandon the traditional points of reference. If a feature has to be done away with, there has to be a rebalancing of the process at the same time.

We must also work towards achieving a policy to help young farmers set up in business and this needs to be done at European level. This is crucial for the CAP to be able to contribute to employment and growth.

Lastly, we must develop the principles of market management to reflect the new situation both inside and outside the EU, strengthen the organisational measures and increase the added value for farmers.

The 30% greening principle for direct aid has been confirmed in the budget. But there is still much more to be done. The Commission's proposals need to be refined: the greening measures need to be clearly defined and they must be kept simple and effective.

These issues are all subjects for research.

This is why we proposed to double the funding. The European Council has reduced the overall budget for research but it will still be substantial – and bigger than in the past. Going even further, we have proposed creating a closer link between the Common Agricultural Policy and research.

We will have the European Innovation Partnership, the expanded Farm Advisory Service, the rural development programmes and strengthened measures for cooperation and innovation.

Throughout the process of reforming the CAP, I will be stressing the importance of research, the importance of supporting:

- research which listens to farmers' needs;
- very broad, multidisciplinary research;
- basic research as well as applied research;
- and, lastly, the dissemination of knowledge.

Agronomic research is a priority. The subject areas have never been so big. I have told young researchers and I have told students at agricultural colleges: you all have your part to play in agriculture. There will not be any shortage of work or research subjects in the years ahead.

I have touched on a few subjects but the list could be much longer. I am sure that the speakers who follow me will expand on this list of subjects and challenges. Nikiforos Sivenas from DG Agri, who is here among you, will be able to brief me.

Thank you for your commitment to agriculture, for your ideas and your work. Please carry on your good work. And enjoy the conference!