

The history of European agricultural policy



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Two of the main aspects of the agricultural debate in 2014 were CAP reform and the associated greening approach. Within the context of the overall EU agricultural policy, it was decided that direct payments would be linked to environmental requirements, leading to an increased greening of pillar 1 (EU-funded aid) in direct payments.

The German Parliament has adopted the corresponding decree, and the exact content of the new provisions has been known since November 2014. Rules are now in place governing the three areas of greening (crop diversification, grassland maintenance and the creation of ecological focus areas). Greening is by no means the start of the European Common Agricultural Policy, but is part of a range of measures which have shaped European agriculture for over 50 years. The start of the European Common Agricultural Policy dates back to the early 1960s,

and was initially still strongly influenced by the Second World War. The main aim was therefore to ensure a secure food supply to the population. Over the next few decades public subsidies led to overproduction of many products such as milk and cereals, which meant that from the 1990s onwards the focus shifted from a product support approach to a farm support approach. In the past two decades environmental factors have become more prominent, and play an increasingly large role in aid distribution. Key steps in the implementation of environmental aspects were the introduction of cross-compliance in 2003 and the current introduction of greening.

Looking back over the past half century of the European Common Agricultural Policy quickly shows that agricultural policy has frequently been adjusted to reflect social, environmental and economic conditions.

1962 Start of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieving food security - Improving productivity - Stabilising markets - Providing farmers with an appropriate income
1970s to 80s Years of crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy focused on production and volumes - Overproduction - Ballooning farm spending - Isolation from the world market
1992 MacSharry Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reducing surpluses - Stabilising the budget - Income stabilisation via direct payments - Expansion of the agricultural structural policy - Environmental topics
2003 Luxembourg decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From product payment to farm payment - Introduction of cross-compliance - Increasing cuts in direct payments
2013 Reform in a green shade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decision to introduce greening - Direct payments more closely linked to environmental requirements - Increased greening of pillar 1

Source: EU Commission 2012: revised



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blooming
future**