

## **Farm to Fork – sustainable food needs commitment of everyone in the supply chain**

The European Parliament agriculture and environment committees are today finalising their joint report on the Farm to Fork strategy. EuroCommerce Director-General Christian Verschueren commented:

*“Our sector has for many years driven sustainable practices, working with suppliers, for example on organic production and other quality standards, and creating a market for farmers and expanding choice for consumers. I am therefore happy to restate today our readiness to contribute to sustainable food systems under the Commission’s Farm to Fork strategy. The Covid crisis has shown that retail and wholesale is an essential sector, ensuring efficient distribution of daily essentials to consumers. We also work hard to do so in a sustainable way and in promoting healthy lifestyles. A wide range of actions already initiated by retailers and wholesalers can be seen from our website [#sustainablecommerce](#).”*

In a consumer survey as part of the joint McKinsey/EuroCommerce report on the [State of Grocery Retail](#) released earlier this year, 50% of consumers said that they planned to buy more healthy, local or environmentally-friendly foods this year, but 26% wanted both to save money on groceries and move towards sustainable lifestyles. This is a clear message to retail and wholesale to work with farmers and the whole supply chain to continue to increase the supply of sustainably-produced, affordable food.

Before the summer, EuroCommerce and many of its members signed up to the Farm to Fork Code of Conduct, confirming our commitment to work on responsible food business and marketing practices. The joint report voted on today reflects the advantages and opportunities presented by a sustainable food system but also some of the challenges which still need to be addressed by all supply chain actors, NGO’s and regulators. These include action on consumer information, enhancing organic production, reducing pesticides, supporting primary producers in the transition to name but a few. The report rightly highlights the many interlinkages with other policies at EU and international level and the need for full coherence between them.

Our sector has responded rapidly to consumer needs, and we are ready to share our experience through constructive dialogue with all players in the supply chain, and use the collaborative platform to be established under the Code of Conduct to share good practice in support of a sustainable food system.

We are looking forward to working with members of the European Parliament when they come to consider upcoming proposals on important related legislative files such as the framework for sustainable food and food information to consumers.

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*EuroCommerce is the principal European organisation representing the retail and wholesale sector. It embraces national associations in 28 countries and 5 million companies, both leading global players such as Carrefour, Ikea, Metro and Tesco, and many small businesses. Retail and wholesale is the link between producers and consumers. Over a billion times a day, retailers and wholesalers distribute goods and provide an essential service to millions of business and individual customers. The sector generates 1 in 7 jobs, offering a varied career to 26 million Europeans, many of them young people. It also supports millions of further jobs throughout the supply chain, from small local suppliers to international businesses. EuroCommerce is the recognised European social partner for the retail and wholesale sector.*