

Tartu, October 31st 2019

Dear Mr Kaspars Gerhards, Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Latvia  
Dear Mr Mart Järvik, Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Estonia  
Dear Mr Andrius Palionis, Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania

The agricultural organisations from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania would like to extend our appreciation for the work that you have done in the Council of Europe, defending interests of our sector. However, there are some substantial issues which still need a proper solution, therefore we ask for your full commitment and continuous efforts to assure a viable future for the farmers in the Baltic States in frames of CAP during the next programming period 2020-2027.

The Council of Europe of 7 and 8 February 2013 agreed to ensure that „all Member States should attain at least the level of EUR 196 per hectare in current prices by 2020“. However, as a result of calculations of national ceilings for the period of 2020-2027, which did not take into consideration actual increase of arable land, direct payments paid to the Baltic farmers in 2020 are expected to be approximately 20 EUR less than approved by the decision of EU Council mentioned above. Moreover, in the proposed calculations of CAP post 2020, the minimum payment level of EUR 196 is ignored, which is the point of reference in the convergence formula. Thus, unfair distribution of payments is programmed until 2027.

The Commission's legislative proposals for the next programming period emphasize the urgent need to take action to meet the climate challenge. Also, the civil society and the European Parliament have confirmed that the CAP must be an instrument for the transition towards more sustainable systems. Rural development policy has proven its importance and effectiveness in Baltic States, enabling to contribute to livelihood of rural areas and tackling the agri-environmental challenges. Therefore, the significant reduction of rural development budget is unacceptable and would sacrifice the possibilities for creating added value and solving many problems in rural areas.

The CAP budget for the next programming period must be maintained to meet the new challenges and ensuring food security, high standards of food safety and quality for consumers.

Estonian Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce

Estonian Farmers Federation

Latvian Farmers Parliament

Latvian Farmers Union

Lithuanian Agricultural Council

Lithuanian Chamber of Agriculture