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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Availability and affordability of fertilisers in the EU – Supporting farmers
and promoting resilient food systems
- Exchange of views

With a view to the Council ('Agriculture and Fisheries') meeting on 26 May 2026, delegations will find in the annex a background document on the above-mentioned subject.

Availability and affordability of fertilisers in the EU – Supporting farmers and promoting resilient food systems

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the energy crisis and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Commission adopted in November 2022 a Communication entitled "Ensuring availability and affordability of fertilisers"¹. The communication included a number of measures to diversify the EU's sources of imported fertilisers, support fertiliser production within the EU, facilitate the production and uptake of alternatives to chemical fertilisers and promote the use of renewable energy sources in fertiliser production. In the AGRIFISH Council meeting of November 2022, delegations generally welcomed the Communication, while calling on the Commission to explore further actions and initiatives on this issue.

The current situation in the Middle East has further heightened the urgency to respond to challenges stemming from the EU's energy dependence and ongoing disruptions to global supply chains, which exert significant pressure on the EU's food production, input costs, farmers' incomes and food prices across the Union. The recent Commission Communication "AccelerateEU - Energy Union Affordable and Secure Energy through Accelerated Action"² underscores the pressing need to intensify actions that will lead to increased autonomy and production of clean energy in the EU and reduced dependency on external non-renewable energy sources. Rising energy costs constrain the EU's chemical fertiliser production capacity due to a costly dependence of the EU fertiliser industry on energy use. At the same time, imported fertilisers are affected by current high prices and supply chain disruptions that increase costs, further exacerbating the situation. The current situation shows that fertiliser markets remain vulnerable.

¹ ST 14613/1/22 REV 1

² ST 8482/26 + ADD1

Against this backdrop, the availability and affordability of fertilisers is back on the agricultural policy agenda. In light of the forthcoming Communication on a fertiliser action plan, the need to advance short, medium and long-term measures to improve the EU's strategic autonomy in fertiliser use is of increased importance. Such measures should aim to support farmers, to promote resilient food systems and to safeguard food affordability for consumers. In this context, the Presidency invites ministers to address the following questions:

- Do the measures recommended in the 2022 Communication on ensuring availability and affordability of fertilisers remain valid? What additional or alternative measures do you consider necessary to address the short, medium and long-term challenges under current geopolitical and local constraints?
 - Taking into account additional challenges related to fertiliser production, use and supply in the EU, how can we ensure the resilience and the competitiveness of the farming sector and food systems in the EU?
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