



MTK's Priorities for the Next Common Agricultural Policy

1. Safeguarding Sufficient and Predictable Funding

MTK insists that the overall EU agricultural budget must be maintained at least at the current real level. The Commission's proposal to simplify the budget structure and introduce minimum ring-fenced amounts for CAP income support is a step forward in transparency. However, the "minimum" approach, if not carefully calibrated, risks underfunding a sector that is foundational for food security, rural vitality, and strategic autonomy. It must be remembered that EU trade policy does not allow food prices to rise in a way that would support farmers' incomes.

For Finland, agricultural funding is not just a line in the budget—it is a lifeline for rural communities, family farms, and national food security. We urge policymakers to ensure that the agricultural envelope is protected against erosion, both in nominal and real terms, and that the allocation mechanism recognizes the unique challenges of net contributor countries and border regions like Finland.

2. Targeting Support to Active Producers and Family Farms

MTK's vision for the CAP is clear: support must be focused on active farmers who are genuinely engaged in food production and land management. We support the exclusion of pensioners from area-based income support after a reasonable transition, while ensuring that other measures remain accessible where justified.

Family farms are the backbone of Finnish and European agriculture. Policies must recognize their role in maintaining rural vitality, food security, and sustainable land use. Coupled support, especially for livestock and sensitive sectors, must remain at least at current levels. In Finland's production conditions, coupled support is essential for maintaining regional balance and market stability.

3. Rethinking Degression and Payment Capping

The Commission's proposal introduces degressive area-based income support and a €100,000 payment cap. While the intention to better target support is understandable,

the current thresholds are too low and risk penalizing efficient, family-based enterprises that are central to food production and rural economies in Finland.

MTK accepts the principle of gradation but calls for higher and more flexible thresholds that reflect the diversity of farm structures across the EU. The design must avoid unintended consequences, such as undermining investment capacity or discouraging growth among family farms. Policymakers should ensure that the mechanism is calibrated to support—not hinder—the resilience and competitiveness of the sector.

4. Ensuring Flexibility for Coupled Support

A critical technical concern is the proposed formula that links the maximum volume of coupled support to the size of the degressive income-support envelope. This could unintentionally constrain coupled support, forcing member states into difficult trade-offs between income support and co-financed measures. **MTK urges policymakers to decouple these mechanisms, allowing member states to maintain coupled support at levels appropriate to their national needs without undermining other policy objectives.**

5. From Compliance to Incentives: A New Approach to Environmental and Climate Action

MTK welcomes the shift from compliance-based conditionality to incentive-driven stewardship. The proposed Farm Stewardship system, which merges eco-schemes and agri-environment-climate measures, is a positive step. The one-off transition measure to de-risk the adoption of sustainable practices is also welcome.

However, it is essential that compensation for environmental, climate, and animal welfare actions is calculated against EU-level legal baselines, not stricter national standards. This principle ensures fairness and comparability across member states and rewards those who have already invested in sustainability.

The new methodology for climate and environment spending, raising the requirement to 43%, is ambitious. MTK supports ambitious green targets, provided the accounting is transparent and the policy toolbox is practical and workable for farmers. Incentives must also recognize and reward early adopters, not just new initiatives.

6. Voluntary and Farmer-Led Risk Management

Resilience is a cornerstone of MTK's vision. We support comprehensive national strategies for farm resilience and risk management, including insurance and mutual funds, as well as the proposed Unity Safety Net for market crises. However, risk management tools must remain voluntary and adaptable to national circumstances. Mandatory schemes risk crowding out more effective national solutions and reducing flexibility.

7. Constructive Updates to the Common Market Organisation (CMO)

The proposed updates to the CMO, including improvements to school schemes, crisis readiness, and marketing standards, are largely positive. MTK welcomes the recognition of protein crops and the development of producer organizations, as well as the continuation of Southern Finland's support. These measures can strengthen farmers' position in the food chain, provided they are backed by adequate funding and national flexibility.

8. The Need for National Flexibility and Subsidiarity

Finally, MTK emphasizes the importance of national flexibility and subsidiarity in CAP implementation. Member states must have the ability to tailor measures to their specific conditions, including the design of degression thresholds, coupled support, and risk management tools. One-size-fits-all solutions rarely work in a union as diverse as the EU.

MTK's Ten Main Objectives for the CAP Reform 2028–2035

1. **Coupled support** must be maintained at least at the current level.
2. **ANC (Areas with Natural Constraints)** measures must cover all of Finland.
3. **Pioneers must be rewarded, not penalized.** Compensation for climate, environmental, and welfare actions must be available for both new and existing efforts, and based on EU—not national—legislation.
4. **National co-financing opportunities** must be preserved at least at the current level.
5. **CAP complementary national support** must be possible also after 2027.
6. **A fairer food chain:** Address unfair trading practices, increase transparency, and ensure a level playing field for farmers in the food market.
7. **Better and more accurate consumer information** and improved market access for farmers.
8. **Focus on EU-level competitiveness:** Policy must support the competitiveness of European agriculture globally.
9. **Growth in food exports:** Support for export growth and internationalization of the food sector.
10. **Smart, targeted incentives:** Encourage innovation, sustainability, and generational renewal in agriculture.