

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: European Commission Launches Public Consultation on its Upcoming Proposal on Sustainable Food Systems

Country: European Union

Post: Brussels USEU

Report Category: Agriculture in the News, Climate Change/Global Warming/Food Security

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Report Highlights:

On April 28, 2022, the European Commission launched a public consultation period for an upcoming proposal for a horizontal framework law to make food systems more sustainable. The Commission is seeking views on different possible ideas such as sustainability labeling or sustainability requirements for food imports. Stakeholders have until July 21, 2022, to comment.

General Information:

In May 2020, the European Union published its [Farm to Fork Strategy](#), which aims to make the EU food system fairer, healthier, and more environmentally friendly. As part of this Strategy, the Commission announced that it would propose framework legislation for a sustainable food system before the end of 2023. The goal is to promote policy coherence at the EU and national level, incorporate sustainability in all food-related policies, and strengthen the resilience of food systems.

On April 28, 2022, the European Commission launched a 12-week public consultation on its upcoming proposal for a horizontal framework law to “accelerate and facilitate the transition to sustainability and ensure that foods placed on the EU market increasingly become sustainable.” This will be done through the introduction of sustainability objectives and principles based on an integrated food system approach. This initiative will also include, among others, provisions for a sustainable food-labeling framework and new governance systems for more active involvement of citizens and stakeholders at all levels.

For more information about the policy options that the European Commission is considering, please see [GAIN Report: European Commission Publishes Roadmap on a Future Regulation to Integrate Sustainability Into All Food-Related Policies](#). It includes:

- General minimum standards to be met for foods produced or placed on the EU market and related food operations;
- Horizontal elements for sustainability analysis in relation to regulated products in the food chain, complementing the existing ‘risk analysis’ principle;
- Legitimate and proportionate requirements on sustainability for food imports in compliance with EU international commitments, particularly in the WTO;
- Provision of information on the sustainable performance of the food (sustainability labeling), while ensuring consistency with other relevant EU labels (e.g. organic) and taking into account other relevant ongoing EU initiatives;
- Minimum mandatory criteria for sustainable food procurement in schools and public institutions;

Commenting on the launch of the consultation, Stella Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, said: "The move towards more sustainable food systems that we envision in our 'Farm to Fork' strategy is key to countering global trends in climate, loss of biodiversity and unhealthy diets. It is also fundamental to our long-term food security. This legislative framework will be essential to support and accelerate this transformation. The urgency of transitioning to sustainability should not be underestimated, so we need to ensure that our upcoming initiative is as ambitious and effective as possible and provides the right tools for all actors in the food system to take action."

The public consultation on the upcoming sustainable food systems proposal calls on European citizens and stakeholders to share their views and experiences. U.S. stakeholders who would like to comment can do so at the following page:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13174-Sustainable-EU-food-system-new-initiative/public-consultation_en

The deadline for input is midnight or 12:00 a.m. Brussels (Universal Time Coordinated + 01:00) on July 21, 2022. All comments provided through this consultation process may be released as public information. The questionnaire consists of several sections and should only be completed once.

The publication of the proposal is expected to be published in the fourth quarter of 2023.

Attachments:

No Attachments.