

For sustainable and healthy nutrition Europe needs a food policy based upon a strong food system

December 2 2015



When aiming for sustainable and healthy eating patterns the starting point for a European food policy, in addition to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), lies in a coordinated food system approach. Current activities are not connected enough to deal with this broad topic. Therefore we have to look at the topic from a food system level. This is

the dominant opinion during the 148th EAAE seminar 'Does Europe need a Food Policy?' organised by LEI Wageningen UR.

Interconnected policy

Sustainable and [healthy eating](#) is too big to leave to consumers alone or to only look at at European level. Therefore a [food system](#) approach is essential which connects all relevant players and activities: from sustainable farming to the menu in the school canteen to food losses in the chain. Also on policy and research level connections have to be made between environmental, agricultural and health experts.

Consumer data needed

For this approach we need analysis and data to support policy makers. The current CAP has created a strong data infrastructure for data collecting on farm level, but the availability of consumer and food chain data is problematic. This data is needed to understand food consumption and to see what the effects of interventions are. An open data infrastructure can support better access, because when the information has been collected, sharing is the next challenge. Commercial data is expensive and public data is difficult to find.

Identify the hubs

More food is not the issue. The question is how to get a certain type of nutrition to a certain kind of consumer. Therefore we have to identify the most important hubs per region. For example, in Europe we see that the retail sector has a very strong position in supporting consumers in making healthy and sustainable food choices.

Food system approach

The topic of [food policy](#) is very broad. Therefore the landmarks for Europe have to be very clear. To summarise, one of the goals has to be to support sustainable and healthy eating patterns. And therefore we need a [food](#) system approach.

Provided by Wageningen University

Citation: For sustainable and healthy nutrition Europe needs a food policy based upon a strong food system (2015, December 2) retrieved 19 July 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-12-sustainable-healthy-nutrition-europe-food.html>

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