



Confédération Européenne des Entrepreneurs de Travaux Techniques Agricoles et Ruraux_European Organisation of Agricultural and Rural Contractors

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The Common Agricultural Policy after 2013

- Since the Treaty of Rome, the European legislator has continuously regulated the conditions for agricultural production and the agricultural produce market, and has increasingly taken account of the realities in the field.
- Agriculture and rural development as a whole have experienced structural changes at European Union level. Rapid and far-reaching changes affecting agriculture and the conditions for agricultural work (quality, environment, rural conservation) have inevitably led to the development of new production methods and jobs, as well as advanced and diversified skills.
- To an increasing extent, these new methods have been developed by specialist companies. These rural contractors have helped replace or enhance traditional agricultural methods and specific tasks required in the past. ARCs have therefore contributed to the adjustments required by the CAP, both in terms of increasing product quality and competitiveness.
- Agricultural and rural contractors (ARCs) are professional contractors who hire out their services chiefly in the agricultural sector. They mainly conduct outside work, whether in agriculture or the forestry sector, which requires the use of modern heavy vehicles. Outside the field of agriculture, rural contractors also assist with municipal works, maintenance of the countryside, paths and water surfaces, protection of the natural environment, composting, land reclamation and even dredging operations.
- Agricultural contractors currently represent approx. ten thousand enterprises and half a million employees working in the European Union.
- The CAP remains vital and essential for sustainable growth, safety, food safety/sovereignty, regional balance/rural development, respect for the environment and biodiversity.

1. The CAP aims to guarantee the quality and traceability of agricultural products

Cross-compliance rules are becoming increasingly important for agriculture, particularly in terms of food safety. In this respect, agricultural and rural contractors represent an integral part of the production chain and provide a vast range of services for farmers. They are therefore real professional contractors providing human resources and a massive fleet of highly specialised machinery.

In 2008, CEETTAR developed its first “Best Practice Guide, which enables ARCs to assess the quality of their own services, which support third parties with the production of foodstuffs and other agricultural produce.

In order to guarantee improved quality and the traceability of agricultural products, the CAP must include the objective of harmonising standards for the provision of services in the Member States, by providing standard documentation, as well as quality standards for key tasks and rural services.

2. The Common Agricultural Policy aims to promote rural development and balanced regional development

The CAP has to be an ambitious and innovative policy for agricultural production and rural development.

By rapidly responding, in the appropriate manner, to the new technological challenges facing agricultural production and the rural environment, rural contractors have created new activities and new professions. This dynamic approach has made it possible to respond to the development and continuous far-reaching changes affecting agriculture, and has partly resolved the structural lack of jobs in rural areas.

The CAP must recognise and support the contribution made by agricultural and forestry contractors to employment and competitiveness in the European Union. It must also use this lever to update the traditional approach to agricultural competitiveness, by treating farmers and their contractors the same when it comes to the purchase of agricultural equipment.

3. The Common Agricultural Policy aims to protect the environment and biodiversity

If we are to aim for green growth, environment protection represents an indisputable priority.

The challenge of combining sustainable agriculture with a high level of environment protection requires advanced technology and a degree of sophistication from the relevant players. These qualities are guaranteed by ARCs, who have a fleet of advanced machinery at their disposal, as well permanent and temporary staff, whose professionalism is recognised on the services market.

During the last fifty years, the agricultural world has been fully transformed. The CAP can no longer limit itself to defining agriculture as being the exclusive domain of the farmer. At least 60% of agricultural work is currently sub-contracted to third parties (ARCs). In conclusion, the representatives of these contractors must be fully involved in the implementation of the new Common Agricultural Policy.

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