

Joint statement concerning the CAP FaST proposal:
Farm Sustainability Tool for Nutrients

The signatories consider that the Farm Sustainability Tool for Nutrients (FaST)ⁱ in the Commission's legislative proposal for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of 1st June 2018ⁱⁱ is a positive measure for improving nutrient management and will contribute to:

- more efficient use of nutrients
- lower losses of valuable fertilising elements
- prevention of eutrophication and of atmospheric nitrogen emissions, protection of drinking water resources, and so better achievement of Water Framework Directive, Nitrates Directive, National Emissions Ceilings Directive, biodiversity and climate policy objectives
- positioning the EU as a frontrunner in agricultural nutrient management and in smart farming

In order to reach a critical mass and have broad positive impacts on the farm economics and the environment, all EU farmers receiving CAP funding should implement the FaST, as proposed by the Commission in the "Rules of conditionality" (GAEC5) in order to:

- ensure a level playing field for farmers across Europe
- collect coherent monitoring information at the European level
- enable valorisation of information to inform farm management practices.

FaST should be implemented with support of farm advisory services to ensure:

- flexibility of choice, for farmers and for Member States/Regions, to use any software/support system which provides the functionalities specified for FaST (footnote n°2, annex III page 14ⁱⁱⁱ)
- in particular, existing smart farm nutrient monitoring tools should be able to continue and be integrated into the overall EU FaST coverage
- full protection of farmers' confidential data input into the system concerning their crop and management choices, yield, etc.
- possibilities to extend, where farmers wish to do so, to include other environmental management aspects, such as climate emissions, soil organic carbon, soil fertility and soil erosion, biodiversity, water/irrigation ...
- a module allowing farmers to calculate the Nutrient Use Efficiency (NUE). The NUE indicator provides information about resource use efficiency, considering nutrients in harvested yield and the surplus in order to allow farmers and decision-makers to examine differences between their fields, and between years.
- data management designed to integrate with water and environment protection policies at the EU, national/regional and river basin management levels, and to integrate with voluntary sustainability initiatives and with supply-chain/purchasing sustainability criteria
- targeted support to small farmers or farmers in isolated areas facing technology, training or infrastructure challenges to access smart online tools

The signatories call on the European Parliament and Council to support the FaST proposal and to maintain it in GAEC5.

Where signatories have further positions concerning the CAP proposal these are available on request from the contacts indicated below.

ⁱ Recital n°22, page 21 - Art. 12, page 45 and Annex III, page 14, GAEC5

ⁱⁱ 2018/0216 (COD), 1st June 2018 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legalcontent/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2018%3A392%3AFIN> and presentation page https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/future-cap_en

ⁱⁱⁱ Footnote 2 of Annex III: "The Tool shall provide at least for the following elements and functionalities:

a) Elements

- Relevant farm information based on LPIS and IACS;
- Information from the soil sampling , on an appropriate spatial and temporal scale;
- Information on relevant management practices, crop history, and yield goals;
- Indications regarding legal limits and requirements relevant to farm nutrients management;
- A complete nutrient budget.

b) Functionalities

- Automatic integration of data from various sources (LPIS and IACS, farmer-generated data, soil analyses etc.) as far as possible, to avoid data input duplication for farmers;
- Two-way communication between PA/MAs and farmers allowed;
- Modularity and possibility to support further sustainability objectives (e.g. emissions management, water management)
- Respect of EU data inter-operability, openness and re-use principles;
- Guarantees for data security and privacy in line with best current standards"