

President of the European commission  
José Manuel Barroso  
1049 Brussels  
Belgium

**EU meat free day against climate change**

19.11.2009

Dear Mr. Barroso,

In the run up to the climate conference in Copenhagen, we would like to remind you of the dire impacts of industrial livestock husbandry on the environment as a whole and climate change in particular.

Farm animal welfare organisations around the world are working with us to raise awareness amongst politicians and the general public about the complex consequences of animal production and consumption. Ever since the FAO report "Livestock's Long Shadow" was published in 2006, it has been clear that raising animals for meat and dairy production is a major driver of climate change, soil pollution, water depletion, deforestation, acid rain, loss of biodiversity etc.

Further studies of the impacts have proven since then that factory farming and the over consumption of meat and dairy products currently prevailing also in the EU Member States are economically and ecologically not sustainable, unhealthy for humans and animals, unfair to the hungry and unethical because of intensive husbandry systems that cause pain and suffering to farm animals.

We, the undersigned farm animal welfare organisations, therefore kindly ask you to now set a good example for more sustainable and healthy production and consumption patterns of meat and dairy products. As an immediate step, you could table a proposal to introduce a meat free day in all canteens of EU-institutions in Brussels, Luxemburg and Strasburg. The city of Ghent did so in May 2009, other cities and institutions have already followed since then.

Renowned scientists like Dr. R.K. Pachauri ([www.rkpachauri.org](http://www.rkpachauri.org)), chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and co-Nobel Peace Prize winner in 2007, are urging meat eaters to go meatless at least one day a week. And Lord Nicolas Stern, former chief economist at the World Bank, Professor of Economics at the London School of Economics and the author of the landmark Review on the economics of climate change (auf [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/sternreview\\_index.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/sternreview_index.htm)), recently stated that meat eating habits will have to change in order to save the climate. (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/environment/article6891362.ece>)

This is an outstanding opportunity for you to show the EU's commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The moderation of meat consumption is one very easy step which has great and quite immediate reduction potential. Further down the line the Common Agricultural Policy will have to be adapted according to the "EU Sustainable Development Strategy" of 2006 (renewed in 2009).

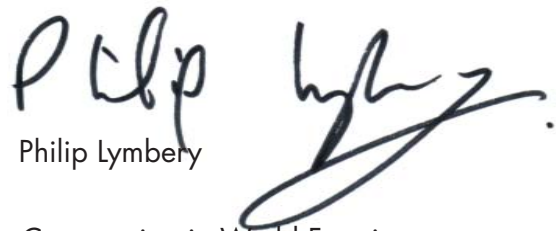
Just to give you an idea of the impact such a decision for a meat free day could have, please consider the results of a study conducted by scientists from the University of Amsterdam: If a person cuts his/her weekly meat intake by 1/7 (one "veggie-day" per week), he/she will reduce his/her carbon footprint by over 196 kg CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents per year. Multiplied by the hundreds of thousands of meals sold by the EU-institution's canteens, you can easily imagine what a great contribution one vegetarian day per week would actually be.

Best regards,



Prof. Dr. Sievert Lorenzen

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