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to higher levels in the Farming sector in Europe

## **BOND initiative in Portugal to take proposals of Family Farming to the Portuguese candidates to the European Parliament**

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in particular, but also other European Union (EU) policies, such as food, trade, tax and other policies, influence the lives of women farmers, farmers and citizens in general.

In this sense, and taking into account that we are in a moment of taking several decisions at EU level, CNA promoted on 30 March the national workshop "Reform of the CAP: Family Farming Proposals", under the BOND project, which brought together more than one hundred participants in the Fundão Professional School – Portugal.

On the eve of the vote (3 April) in the European Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (COMAGRI) on the European Commission's proposals for the CAP reform, and the post-2020 CAP reform process ongoing and with the EP elections scheduled for 26 May, this initiative provided an important opportunity to discuss which policies are more convenient and more strategic for Family Farming, the Rural World and the Food Sovereignty of the country.

With participants from various regions, among farmers, technicians, association leaders, institutional representatives, and others, the initiative began with a greeting to the participants by the host entities (CNA, ADACB - Farmers Association of Castelo Branco District, DRAPC – Regional Directorate of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Center, Fundão Town Hall and Professional School of Fundão).

There followed a period of speeches in plenary on the current Common Agricultural Policy and the prospects for the future, with a view to enabling more informed participation in the group work which took place in the afternoon.

The Mayor of Fundão emphasized the need for policies to enhance the territories, flexibilization of instruments and support for diversified forms of organization.



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The DRAPC referred to the importance of the UN's determination of the Family Agriculture Decade (2019-2028), the establishment in Portugal of the Family Agriculture Statute and the need for specific protection measures.

Pedro Santos, from the Directorate of CNA, gave a presentation focused on the needs of Family Farming and the small and medium scale farmers. According to the leader, this type of agriculture must be supported, valued and promoted and therefore the new CAP should consider it a priority. Eduardo Diniz, of the GPP - Office of Planning, Policy and General Administration, gave a presentation on the main axes of the CAP after 2020 and the state of the negotiations, noting the delays and consequences of Brexit. Agostinho Lopes, a former deputy and specialist in agricultural affairs, addressed the issue of the unequal distribution of aid between farmers, a situation that has persisted throughout the various CAP reforms. In his view, the impact assessment of the measures on the redistribution of agricultural production and the impact of the productivist and resource predatory model is lacking.

At the end of these interventions there was a discussion space, with those present expressing their very concrete concerns about agricultural policies and the impact they have on day-to-day work, causing great difficulties to small and medium scale farmers, particularly as regards the disposal of production and the marketing of production at better and fair prices. Emphasis was laid also on the need to ease tax obligations.

After a break for lunch, the participants divided into working groups to discuss the major themes for Family Farming within the framework of the ongoing CAP Reform and other policies, which should be discussed and questioned and of concern to Farmers and Family Farmers. Among the most common concerns is the need to promote Family Farming and the definition of regionalized policies, the facilitation of market rules and the organization of production for small farmers, and the harmonization of rules for countries outside the Union.

There have been valuable contributions, from which concrete questions are being prepared to be sent to the Portuguese candidates to the European Parliament and from whom answers are expected, in order to assess the position they will take, if elected, within the European Parliament.

It was a very important and participated workshop, which provided an excellent opportunity to get the farmers' voices to the future political decision makers. The clarification and participation of Farmers and other actors in the decision process is fundamental and constitutes an exercise on citizenship and democracy.



This workshop is part of the BOND project, a Horizon 2020 project funded by the European Union and led by the University of Coventry in the United Kingdom, which comprises 16 partners from 12 European countries.

It aims to achieve higher levels of organization and networking and to develop a healthier, more productive and harmonious agricultural sector in Europe in the long term.