

THE EU FARM TO FORK STRATEGY THE EU **STARCH INDUSTRY'S** POSITION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
OCTOBER 2020

Starch Europe fully supports the EU Green Deal ambition to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, and the recognition of the central role of a more sustainable food system in contributing to that objective, as evidenced by the holistic approach of the **EU Farm to Fork strategy**.

Starch Europe looks forward to **working with the European Commission and other stakeholders in elaborating and implementing the actions needed to achieve the objectives of the Strategy**.

The EU starch industry is a zero-waste industry. It adds value to all the components of the EU's agricultural materials to make ingredients which make food taste better, more nutritious and last longer, as well as ingredients which act as alternatives to fossil-based ingredients in industrial applications. Hence, **EU starch producers already make a significant contribution to sustainable food systems and the Green Deal objectives**. With the right policy support that contribution can be even more.

The Farm to Fork strategy sets the objectives going forward. The devil will be in the detail of how to achieve those objectives, through the various initiatives listed in the draft action plan annexed to the strategy. In the current challenging environment each of those initiatives must be subject to thorough **economic impact assessments**, both individually and holistically since trade-offs will be needed, and ensure that they in no way negatively impact food safety or food security.

BIOECONOMY

For the food system to be more sustainable, policy initiatives must look beyond food. **Implementation of the EU Bioeconomy strategy and 2018 action plan will be key to the implementation of the Farm to Fork Strategy**. It is only because it can serve customers in all four bioeconomy outlets - food, feed, industrial and energy that the starch industry is a zero waste industry. Starch Europe welcomes the reference to the importance of a Bioeconomy approach in both the Farm to Fork strategy and the Circular Economy Action Plan.

INNOVATION

Embracing innovation and technology will be key to achieving the Farm to Fork strategy objectives. Starch Europe strongly welcomes the additional funding being allocated to R&D, notably in the development of the Bioeconomy and more **EU grown plant-based proteins**. For these innovation efforts to have maximum impact, there must also be consumer acceptance that food innovation is a force for good. **All stakeholders, including the EU institutions, have a crucial role to play in promoting the importance of food innovation in achieving a more sustainable food system**.

RAW MATERIAL SUPPLY

The EU Farm to Fork strategy, along with the EU biodiversity strategy, present significant challenges, as well as opportunities for the food chain. This is particularly the case for farmers, notably with the targets being set for pesticide use levels and organic production. A pre-requisite for the development of the EU starch industry is the reliable supply of safe, sustainable agricultural raw materials at affordable prices and of a consistent quality. **Pesticides today play an important role in guaranteeing food safety and crop yield and any restrictions to their use must be accompanied by alternative solutions to fight against disease and mycotoxin development.** These solutions include precision and digital farming but new genomic techniques also have the potential to make an important contribution and clarity in terms of the extent to which they can be used in the EU is urgently needed. EU farmers need access to all the tools available, as well as financial support, in order to make the transition being asked of them.

HEALTH & NUTRITION

Nutrient profiles, front of pack labelling and maximum levels for certain nutrients have the potential to help shift consumer behaviour in their dietary habits. Essential to the positive contribution of such initiatives will be their backing in robust science. The EU starch industry produces a huge range of ingredients for its food and drink industry customers and is constantly innovating to improve those ingredients going forward. As such, **EU starch producers will play a crucial role in helping their customers in their reformulation efforts.** It will be essential to ensure that these reformulation efforts genuinely contribute to more sustainable diets, and are not solely driven by the label.



TRADE

EU starch producers compete in a global market. Starch Europe welcomes the Farm to Fork strategy's stated ambition to pursue Green Alliances on sustainable food systems and include an ambitious sustainability chapter in bilateral trade agreements, but **if a global level playing field can not be achieved, suitable mechanisms will be needed to ensure that EU starch producers can compete.**

[Click here to read our full Position Paper on the EU Farm to Fork Strategy](#)

QUICK FACTS



24 Million Tonnes
of Raw Materials



75 Starch Plants



11 Million Tonnes
of Starch & Derivatives



Over 5 Million Tonnes
of Proteins & Fibres



15.500
Direct Jobs



100K Indirect Jobs
incl. **60K** Farmers