



27 February 2023

CALL TO ACTION – EU VOTING SCHOOL SCHEME

On behalf of the Future Food4Climate Coalition, associating 78 civil society organizations, **we call for action to introduce changes to the EU School Scheme¹, changes that will include plant-based milk substitutes in the program and limit (ultimately – eliminate) the promotion of milk and milk-derived products in schools.**

We must bear in mind that through the EU School Scheme, among others, the European Union is expressing leadership in the fight against climate change, as well as decarbonising its economy - in this case by promoting the transition to a plant-based diet. The EU School Scheme is essential in promoting balanced and healthy eating habits among children. The inclusion of plant-based foods, such as fortified plant-based drinks, in the EU School Scheme is an important tool to promote balanced plant-based diets. Such inclusion will also meet the equality aspect and will serve the implementation of the right to choose children and their parents.

The health aspects of including plant-derived products in the program should also not be forgotten - supporting the promotion of milk and milk-derived products produced by the sector of the so-called farming is obviously against the health interests of school-aged children. Milk and dairy products are the main source of unhealthy saturated fat in the diet, as well as the most common food allergens in the world. Another important issue is the massive use of antibiotics by cattle farmers. Their presence in dairy products is harmful to human health. According to the European Union, the transition to plant production will also be a step towards preventing cancer². It should also be borne in mind that the production of milk and dairy products is the domain of industrial farms - and these have a drastic, negative impact on the quality of life of people living in their vicinity, leading to water, soil and air pollution, emitting odors and noise, making it impossible to live in their vicinity.

The inclusion of plant-based milk substitutes products in the EU School Scheme will also implement the postulates of the new initiative of the European Commission - EU SFS Law³. It will lay down general principles and objectives, together with the requirements and responsibilities of all actors in the EU food system. It aims to ensure a truly sustainable EU food system and will lay down provisions on, inter alia,

¹ Full name: EU school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme.

² Europe's Beating Cancer Plan; https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-02/eu_cancer-plan_en_0.pdf.

³ Full name: Sustainable Food System Law.



minimum criteria for sustainable public procurement. Plant-based milk substitutes in schools will meet this requirement of EU SFS Law.

The above argumentation proves that it is necessary to vote in favor of supporting the distribution of plant-based milk substitutes and plant-based food products in schools under the EU School Scheme. We need the EU School Scheme as a program that really fits into the assumptions of the EU Farm2Fork Strategy, Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and SFS EU Law and complements them!

About Green REV:

The mission of the Green REV Institute Foundation is to change and build the world with respect for people, animals and the climate. We notice that modern agriculture is no longer what we used to know. It has become an industry that affects people's quality of life and health, climate change and the objectification of animals. Food production is concentrated, the scale of industrial agriculture is growing and the number of small family farms is decreasing. Concern for health and high quality of products has been replaced by the profit and loss account and the fight for the lowest possible production costs. Industrial agriculture changes the climate, makes people lose the right to live in a clean environment. Therefore, we point out that the law must follow our needs, social changes, must effectively protect us - that is why we take action in the spirit of its change. Green REV Institute is a member organization of the international 50by40 coalition, World Federation for Animals, Eurogroup for Animals, European Vegetarian Union, TAPP Coalition, Aquatic Animal Alliance, an organization accredited to the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), and one of 10 NGOs within the EU Platform on Animal Welfare.

Future Food 4 Climate is a coalition of civil society organizations, associating 78 organizations from Poland and Ukraine, which undertakes advocacy and watchdog activities, engages and mobilizes to activities, activism for a just transformation of the food system.