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Answer given by Mr Hansen
on behalf of the European Commission
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Strengthening farmers' position within the value chain and protecting them against unfair trading practices is at the heart of Commissioner for Agriculture and Food mandate. The EU has already implemented under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) different measures to reinforce the position of farmers within the food supply chain, such as those under the Common Markets Organisation Regulation¹ and the Unfair Trading Practices Directive². These tools are already working in support of farmers to ensure they continue to play a positive role for our societies. Among others, these tools work to strengthen cooperation opportunities for farmers, ensure certain exclusions from competition rules, protect farmers from the imposition of unfair trading practices and enhance market transparency, including through the newly established EU agri-food chain Observatory (AFCO). In addition, the Commission intends to propose amendments to further strengthen the position of farmers, while continue to reflect on further improvements.

The Commission will continue to explain the CAP to the public, inform citizens about the challenges facing the agriculture and food sector and promote a more sustainable Union model of agriculture³. Concerted communication actions will be deployed, also to fight disinformation on the CAP policy.

With the future budget, the EU needs to ensure that the CAP support is better targeted and that the right balance between incentives, investments and regulation is established. The Commission is assessing the best options in terms of conditionality for CAP payments and how to further promote positive economic, environmental and social outcomes in the context of preparations for the future CAP.

¹ Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products, OJ L 347/671.

² Directive (EU) 2019/633 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on unfair trading practices in business-to-business relationships in the agricultural and food supply chain, OJ L 111/59.

³ Article 46 of Regulation - 2021/2116 - <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R2116>