

## Herders' March 2026

### Shepherds and agricultural policy



#### **Demands of the Herders' March**

The grazing of livestock such as sheep and goats plays an indispensable role in nature conservation, climate protection and coastal protection, and is therefore systemically important. It must be permanently safeguarded politically, legally and financially.

This position paper forms the basis for the Herders' March in 2026 and is addressed to policymakers, government officials and society at large.

If we are to ensure the long-term viability of sheep and goat farming, the new EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) must be structured in a stable, reliable and targeted manner starting in 2028:

- A stable agricultural budget and a proven structure: An independent agricultural budget at least at current levels (including inflation adjustments) and the preservation of the two-pillar principle with a clear separation of responsibilities and funding.
- Strengthening coupled animal premiums: Significantly expanding support for sheep and goats to secure income, stabilise herds and recognise landscape-conservation efforts.
- Further development of eco-schemes: Continuation and increase of the per-hectare rates, ensuring a uniform and flexible nationwide structure, and providing targeted support for livestock-raising grassland farms.
- A strong second pillar: Expanding practical, non-bureaucratic programmes to promote extensive grassland management and active landscape conservation.
- Support for disadvantaged areas: Continuation of the compensatory allowance for locational disadvantages, clearly tied to appropriate stocking rates.
- Targeted investment support: Assistance with modernisation, barn construction and innovation, as well as special programmes for young farmers and risk management.
- Fair direct payments: Rejection of decreasing payments and capping, without prejudice to increased support for the first hectares to stabilise small and medium-sized farms.
- Preservation of genetic diversity: Expansion of programmes to protect and support endangered livestock breeds.

The future CAP, as well as national agricultural and environmental policies, must ensure practical and reliable framework conditions for sheep and goat farming.

Shepherds must be able to earn a family income comparable to that of other qualified entrepreneurs—including through appropriate remuneration for their services for biodiversity, climate stability and the preservation of important habitats—and to pay fair wages.

The planned 2028–2034 financial framework is viewed critically, as cuts and national plans jeopardise key objectives and threaten to distort competition.

Without shepherds, there will be a shortage of the essential stewards needed for open landscapes, dikes, Natura 2000 sites and biodiverse grasslands.

***We take care of the landscape you love!***

Herders' March Working Group

[info@hirtenzug2026.de](mailto:info@hirtenzug2026.de)



Vereinigung Deutscher Landesschafzuchtverbände e.V.  
 (Association of German State Sheep Breeders' Associations)  
 Claire-Waldoff-Str. 7, 10117 Berlin  
 Tel.: +49 (0) 30 31904 197  
 Email: [info@schafe-sind-toll.com](mailto:info@schafe-sind-toll.com)



Förderverein der Deutschen Schafhaltung e.V.  
 (Association for the Support of German Sheep Husbandry)  
 Wilhelm-Kuhr-Str. 5, 13187 Berlin  
 Tel: 0159-04382931  
 Email: [wende.schaf@outlook.de](mailto:wende.schaf@outlook.de)