



FIERAGRICOLA
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Fieragricola interviews the author of one of the historical CAP reforms (1992)

"THE CAP IS GOING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION - FOCUS ON QUALITY" SAYS FORMER EU COMMISSIONER RAYMOND MACSHARRY

The 1992 reform of the Common Agricultural Policy that bears his name introduced partly decoupled payments for the first time and was a revolution for agriculture. And as regards current CAP negotiations, MacSharry has words in favour of his successor, Dacian Cioloş: "I think that with a strong focus on the environment the CAP is going in the right direction."

Verona, 18 February 2013. As yet, no one still knows whether it will be possible to reach a compromise over content and budget, since the European Parliament is threatening to reject the agreement defined by the Commission, but the proposed CAP reform finds support from an important former key player: **Raymond MacSharry** is a former European Commissioner for Agriculture and one of the great reformers of the Common Agricultural Policy (Cap). Veronafiere interviewed him about the CAP and the liberalisation of vineyards.

MacSharry is 75 years old today and lives in Ireland, his home country. 1992 saw the ratification of the CAP agreement that bears his name - a Common Agricultural Policy with strong and innovative character. The MacSharry reform focused on bringing EU prices closer to the price lists on the main international markets and a compensation system for agriculturists through direct payments per hectare differentiated by crop. It launched the era of partially decoupled support.

And proposal put forward by Cioloş? It goes in the right direction.

As regards the CAP reform currently being negotiated, MacSharry has words in favour of his successor. "I'm not thoroughly up-to-date about the latest developments," he said, "but I believe that a strong focus on the environment will take the CAP in the right direction. We must be careful and define a policy that respects the balance between the need to produce and respect for the environment."

As regards liberalisation, MacSharry also remarked on the abolition of milk quotas, which in his home country - Ireland has a national quota of around 6 million tonnes and at times has found itself in the same situation as Italy - means that limits will no longer be exceeded.

In a liberalisation key from 1 April 2015, the main principles which countries such as Italy, and more generally Europe, will have to apply will be ones of quality. "For some products, such as wine," MacSharry added, "competition is on a world scale, with increasingly stiff competition between European and new world producers. The alternative to policies based on price, which we are obviously unlikely to win, is the quality ensured by European brands."

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