



## Peasant and farmer organisations in Europe and South America come together against the EU-MERCOSUR Free Trade Agreement

As a group of farmer and farm worker organisations from Mercosur and EU countries, we stand together against the EU-MERCOSUR Free Trade Agreement. This FTA is based on an obsolete paradigm in which agricultural products are treated like any other commodity, disregarding human rights, the climate and biodiversity crises, food sovereignty and the rights of food producers to a fair income.

For many years, we farmers, peasant farmers, landless peoples, Afro-descendant peoples and farm workers have been suffering the consequences of the deregulation of agricultural markets via the international free trade regime. The interest of corporate agri-business has been systematically put before the interests of small-scale food producers and farm workers. The price of the food we produce has been artificially disconnected from the cost of local production. We are put in competition with one another, despite the fact that our production conditions vary greatly from country to country (for example regarding climate conditions, health, social and environmental standards, cost of labour, access to land and production tools, etc.).

The commodification of land, water and seeds leads to the impoverishment of rural people. The corporations that progressively take control over the food systems only manage to be “competitive” because they are heavily subsidised by public money and because they are not required to pay for the sanitary, environmental and social costs of their industrial production model.

Our rights, recognised in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, are structurally violated by this international free-trade regime. We see no mention of UNDROP in the planned EU-MERCOSUR FTA and fear that this new FTA may worsen the human rights situation of peasants, small-scale farmers and farm workers.

The EU-MERCOSUR agreement, instead of promoting the ecological reterritorialisation of our food systems, will increase the transcontinental exchange of agricultural products which can rather be sustainably and agroecologically produced in our territories. From a sustainable food system point of view, this is in total contradiction with all the commitments of our governments in the climate Paris Agreement and in the sustainable development goals.

Such agreement will encourage unsustainable production models in rural areas, making even more small and medium scale food producers disappear and migrate to urban locations to work precarious jobs. In the EU, the farming population already accounts for less than 5% of total employment while in MERCOSUR countries, rural people are among the most marginalised population. Does this really align with our governments’ long-term vision for rural areas?

Our governments say that this agreement contains sustainability provisions and takes into account the interests of workers and farmers, but it is not true. Instead, they support the interests of an elite industrial food industry, which is responsible for the ecological disaster in our communities.

It is widely known that the EU-MERCOSUR agreement cannot be ratified in a democratic way. In Europe, the European Commission and some EU Member States are pushing to split the agreement as a way to bypass the democratic control of national parliaments. Others promote putting together a non-binding additional document to pretend they are taking into account environmental concerns.

We strongly condemn these attempts to greenwash this unsustainable FTA and to overlook the strong democratic opposition that this new FTA generates.

It is time to shift from the free-trade paradigm. The EU-MERCOSUR FTA should be abandoned.

Instead, as La Via Campesina we demand a new international framework for international trade based on food sovereignty. We support international cooperation and solidarity between the people. Bilateral or bi-regional cooperation agreements should have at their core human rights, and in particular food producers' rights as recognised in the UNDROP. They should allow genuine agricultural development which gives the priority to local food production and agroecology. They should stop the expansion of corporate power on food and agriculture and give the priority to small- and medium-scale food producers.

As peasants, small-scale farmers and farm workers from the two continents, we call all social movements and civil society organisations to stand against the EU-MERCOSUR agreement and demand our governments to stop this agreement!

#### Signatures from EU countries

❖ European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC)	Europe (31 member organisations)
❖ SOC-SAT	Spain
❖ Ehne Bizkaia	Spain
❖ Fugea	Belgium
❖ Norsk Bonde-og Smabrukarlag	Norway
❖ NOrdBruk	Sweden
❖ Frie Bønder Levende	Denmark
❖ ÖBV-Via Campesina Austria	Austria
❖ MODEF	France
❖ MAP	Belgium
❖ Boerenforum	Belgium
❖ La CNA – Confederação Nacional da Agricultura	Portugal
❖ Toekomstboeren	Netherlands
❖ ARI	Italy
❖ COAG	Spain
❖ Confédération paysanne	France
❖ MIJARC	Europe
❖ Abl	Germany
❖ ACFE	Croatia

#### Signatures from Mercosur countries

❖ Coordinadora Latinoamericana de Organizaciones del Campo (CLOC-Vía Campesina)	Latin America and the Caribbean (84 member organisations)
❖ La Via Campesina America del Sur	South America (42 member organisations)
❖ MNCI Somos Tierra	Argentina
❖ Conamuri, Organización de Mujeres Campesinas e Indígenas	Paraguay

❖ Red Nacional de Semillas Nativas y Criollas	Uruguay
❖ Mesa Agroalimentaria Argentina	Argentina
❖ Movimento dos pequenos agricultores (MPA)	Brazil
❖ MMC Brasil, Movimento de mulheres camponesas	Brazil
❖ Movimento de los Trabajadores Rurales Sin Tierra (MST)	Brazil

Signatures from other organisations across Europe and Latin America

❖ Federacion Nacional de Cooperativas agropecuarias	Colombia
❖ APEMECAFE	Colombia
❖ FENSUAGRO	Colombia
❖ Fenacoa	El Salvador
❖ Comunidades Negras-ICETEX	Colombia
❖ CAN Peru	Peru
❖ Conpi	Colombia
❖ Uniterre	Switzerland