

Precision Livestock Farming and actual farmers' protests

In several cities in France, Belgium, Italy, Greece, the Czech Republic, Spain, UK, and the Netherlands farmers show their anger by blocking traffic and protesting to their governments. European farmers are mainly protesting about all the costly EU climate related and animal health and welfare rules that influence cost of production.

In the US farmers are dealing with similar issues through the Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance and are continuing discussions with Congress about the farm bill while pressing for more assurance that the legislation is responsive to the agricultural producer's needs. In India farmers seek legal guarantees for minimum price support and protest against cheaper imports that hit farm income.

Many people in the community understand the arguments and reasons why farmers are protesting. Farmers have valuable arguments by stating that it is not correct that the EU is asking European farmers to implement more costly rules from while at the same time they allow cheaper animal products to enter the EU without fulfilling the same rules.

Europe was ahead in R&D of PLF-technology for automated continuous monitoring of animal health and welfare but is not asking for application of this technology for products imported. It would be logical to ask importers to implement the same conditions our farmers have to fulfil and to export not only animal products but also European technology to monitor and deliver the data on the animal products like e.g., the number of infections animals were suffering from.

In the 2024ECPLF conference (the 11th European conference, 9 – 12 September in Bologna, Italy) we have received 244 abstracts from 26 countries worldwide. It is an opportunity and a duty for research and industry to discuss the implementation issues and opportunities of the PLF-technology to help farmers reduce environmental impact while improving animal health and welfare. If we cannot realize this, many farmers and companies will not stay in business.

All companies and organizations related to livestock farming should participate in this conference to discuss and contribute to solutions for farmers working with animals. Therefore, we also urge (or “invite”) you to sponsor the conference and show our farmers your presence in and contributions to the livestock sector.