



Farmers' contribution to Soil Protection in Europe

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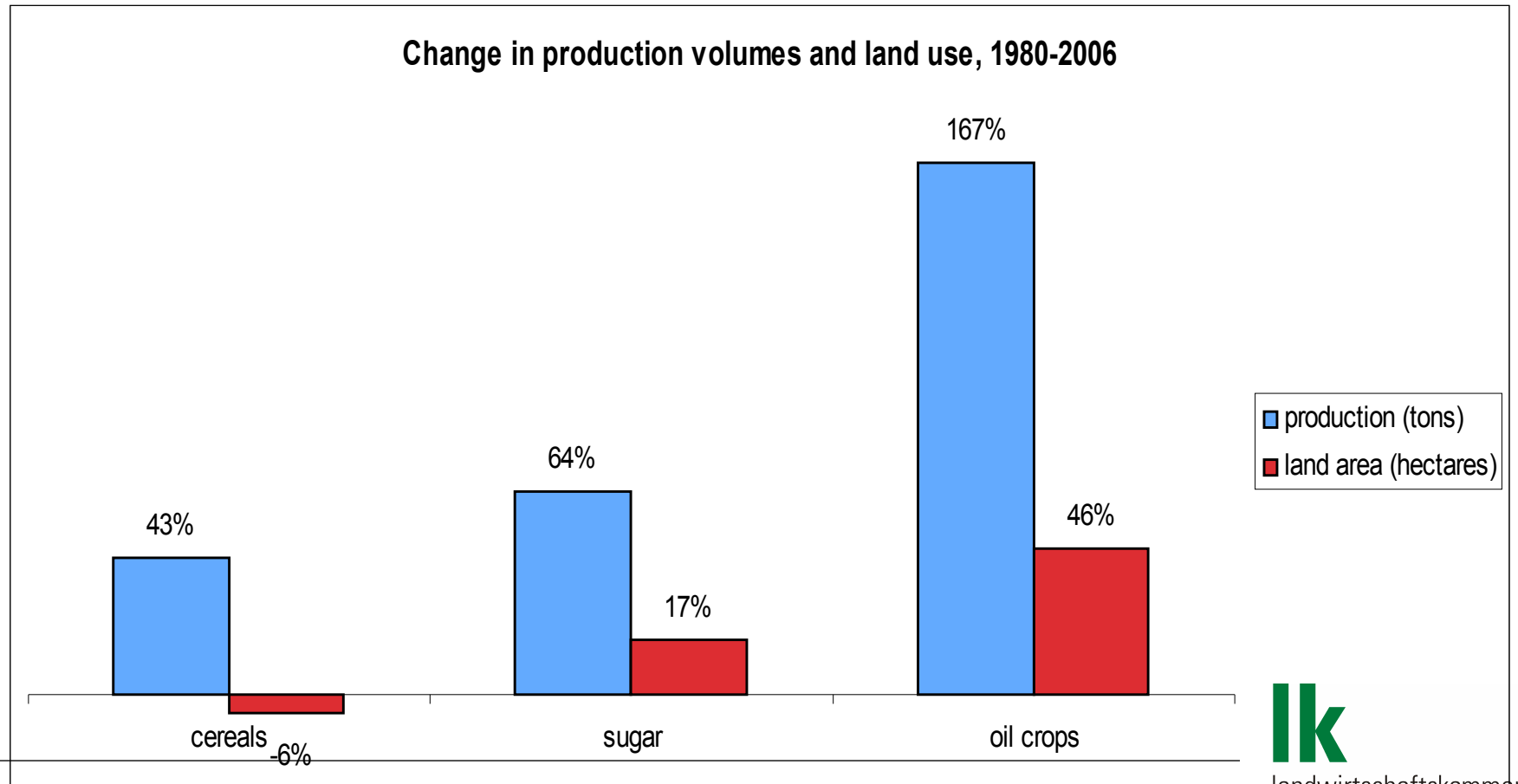


Current and future challenges for the farming sector

- Demand of secure food supply
- Increase in world population & changes in food pattern
- Increasing production costs
- Price volatility for agricultural commodities
- Globalisation and trade liberalisation
- Production of additional services (e.g. landscape)
- Environmental protection and climate change

Productivity increases and land use

In general, demand expansion for agricultural commodities has so far been met mainly by productivity increases, not by land use change:



Soil protection at European level – current legislation

legally binding rules at European level

- ✂ **Waste Framework Directive, Groundwater Directive, Nitrate Directive, Water Framework Directive, Floods Directive etc**
- ✂ **Cross Compliance**
GAEC: soil erosion, soil organic matter, soil structure
permanent grassland
- ✂ **Future soil framework Directive ???**

Agri-Environmental Development

- ✂ **Regional approach**

- ✂ **Incentives**



Soil Framework Directive – Position of European Farmers (1)

- Soil is one of the most important production factors in agriculture and forestry
- Soil is always owned by someone – different to air, wild flora and fauna
- In favour of European strategy for soil protection – however, rejection of European soil Directive
- Subsidiarity – best way to deal at national / regional level
- Great administrative burden – similar to Natura 2000
- Impact on farm land value

Soil Framework Directive – Position of European Farmers (2)

- In contradiction to decision of European Council:
Reduction of administrative cost at 25 %
- No focus on quantitative soil protection
 - **Soil sealing:** demand of agricultural areas for housing and infrastructure (Germany: 116 ha per day; Austria: 12,1 ha per day)
 - **Sealed area is a carbon source:** 181-453 t CO₂/ha and year

Agri-environmental measures and soil conservation

- Offered in all Member States (Art 39 RDR)
- Accepted by farmers
- According to evaluation report successful to obtain environmental improvements
- Examples of measures:
 - Soil erosion: catch crops, buffer strips, crop rotation
 - Soil structure: reduced tillage, permanent grass coverage
 - Reduction of inputs on soil: fertilisers, plant protection products, organic farming

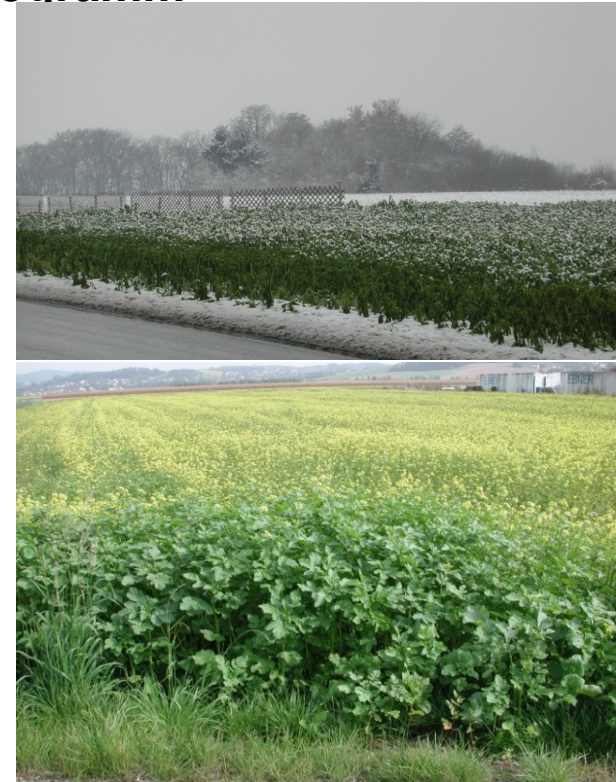


Agri-environmental measures and soil conservation in Austria (2006)

- **126.754 farms participate at agri-environmental programm**
- **Out of 145.634 farms (= 87 %)**

Soil related measures

	participants
Organic farming	18.997
Abstain from certain inputs on grassland	45.262
Reduction of certain inputs on arable land	34.816
Green up arable land in autumn and winter	55.091
Water protection	4.066



Example: Advisory system in Austria

Chambers of Agriculture offer an advisory network throughout Austria and employ about 700 advisers

9 Chambers with 79 regional centers for i.a. advice

- individual advice
- group advice
- field trial and visits



Recommendations (1)

- Education, training and advice
- Regional approach necessary via incentives
 - agri-environmental programmes
 - cooperation with other stakeholder eg. water services
- Special contracts for “hot spots”
 - via i.a. sponsoring
- Investment aid for environmental techniques
 - eg. sowing machines for direct seed



Recommendations (2)

- Support for research
- Coherent environmental legislation
- Trade rules
 - coherence between international trade agreements and environmental agreements
 - Border protection (e.g. climate duties)

Thank you for your attention!

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