# Q&A: EU to provide milk to 350,000 children in Syria

Brussels, 30 March 2016

**Which specific country is targeted? And what is the target population?**

The main target population consists of approximately 350 000 school children inside Syria benefiting from an ongoing school snacks programme. The milk will complement snacks already provided daily to children, and further enhance their nutrition.

**Why provide milk products to people in need?**

In Syria, there is a severe shortage of milk products. Consumption of milk has been significantly reduced amongst poor households due to high food prices. The conflict has had a severe impact on the agriculture sector and led to a decline in food production, particularly dairy production. Syrian families typically consumed milk and other dairy products on a daily basis prior to the crisis. At present, poor households rarely have access to milk and in some cases it has completely disappeared from their diet.

**What milk products will the EU be providing?**

The products provided will be in the form of packs of Ultra High Temperature (UHT) milk as this is the most suitable form of milk for distribution, given the logistics and high temperatures involved.

**Where will the milk products come from?**

The milk provided under this Decision will be of EU origin, regardless of the place where it will be procured.

**Why should the milk be of EU origin?**

This funding is part of the €500 million solidarity package for European farmers presented by the Commission in September 2015 targeting the dairy sector among its priorities. It will support European farmers through the purchase of drinking milk while at the same time contributing to address one of the biggest challenges the EU is facing.

**Will this measure end up affecting the local production capacity?**

This Decision complies with the relevant WTO legislation. There is no reason to believe that the intended distribution would harm local production in Syria and its neighbouring countries, as the quantities concerned are in effect marginal when considered in the context of local demand.

**Who will purchase and distribute the milk products?**

Being a humanitarian aid measure, this Decision will be implemented through the financing of non-governmental organisations (European-based NGOs), international agencies and international organisations (UN Agencies and International Red Cross and Red Crescent movement), specialised agencies of the Member States.

Financing agreements signed by the Commission are based on partnership agreements with NGOs, international organisations and UN Agencies. This way of working ensures quality, flexibility and transparency of procedures in the implementation of humanitarian aid operations. The partnership underpins the contractual relationship by a permanent dialogue on operational, policy and administrative issues. The Commission currently works with some 200 humanitarian aid partners, the majority of which are NGOs.

**How will this measure be funded?**

This one-off scheme will be financed from the EU budget. The funding for this scheme (EUR 30 million) is foreseen in the 2016 EU budget as adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in December. The measure is additional to other humanitarian funding for people affected by the Syria conflict.

**For More Information**

IP/16/1103 **:** EU to provide milk to 350,000 school children in Syria

Website of Christos Stylianides: Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid & Crisis Management: http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/stylianides_en

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