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The European Commission has today presented a new package of measures worth €500 million from EU funds to support farmers in the face of ongoing market difficulties, particularly on the dairy market.

The measures were presented to the Council of EU Agriculture Ministers by Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Phil Hogan: *"Coming at a time of significant budgetary pressures, this package provides a further robust response, and means that the Commission has mobilised more than €1 billion in new money to support hard-pressed farmers. Our ultimate goal is to see the much needed recovery of prices paid to farmers, so that they may make a living from their work and continue to provide safe, high quality food for citizens, as well as their contribution to rural areas and rural jobs and the provision of public goods."*

Today's package contains three main elements:

- A EU-wide scheme to incentivise a reduction in milk production (€150 million)
- Conditional adjustment aid to be defined and implemented at Member State level out of a menu proposed by the Commission (€350 million that Member States will be allowed to match with national funds, thus potentially doubling the level of support being provided to farmers)
- A range of technical measures to provide flexibility (e.g. on voluntary coupled support), cash-flow relief (e.g. through an increase in the amount of the advances for both direct and area-based rural development payments) and reinforce the safety net instruments (by prolonging intervention and private storage aid for Skimmed Milk Powder).

The precise details of all the different measures will be finalised in the coming weeks, in consultation with Member State experts. The budget implications of the proposed measures will be incorporated in an amending letter to the draft budget 2017 in the autumn.

For more information on this funding package and others, visit the website of the European Commission.

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