

Future-proofing EU agri-food through Research & Innovation

September 2026

A New Strategic Approach to Research and Innovation for competitive, resilient and sustainable Agriculture, Forestry, Rural Areas and Food Systems.

A strategic asset for Europe: Agri-food in Figures

450 million

Europeans rely on Europe's agri-food system.

€1.5 trillion

Turnover of the EU food and drink industry (2026).

30 million

People employed, roughly 15% of all EU jobs in 2023.

What the Strategic Approach will do

The Strategic Approach provides a clear direction for **research and innovation**, helping turn research and stakeholder needs into innovative and scalable solutions across the agri-food sector.



**Deployment of
new technologies**



**Dissemination and
uptake of R&I results**



**Thematic R&I needs
for the future**

- Accelerate innovative solutions to market and support scale-up.
- Strengthen links between researchers and stakeholders to bring knowledge, tools and technologies into practice.
- Support a competitive, resilient and sustainable agri-food sector through innovation.

AgRI 2040 and **Food 2040** provide the frameworks to translate this direction into R&I actions across the agri-food sector.

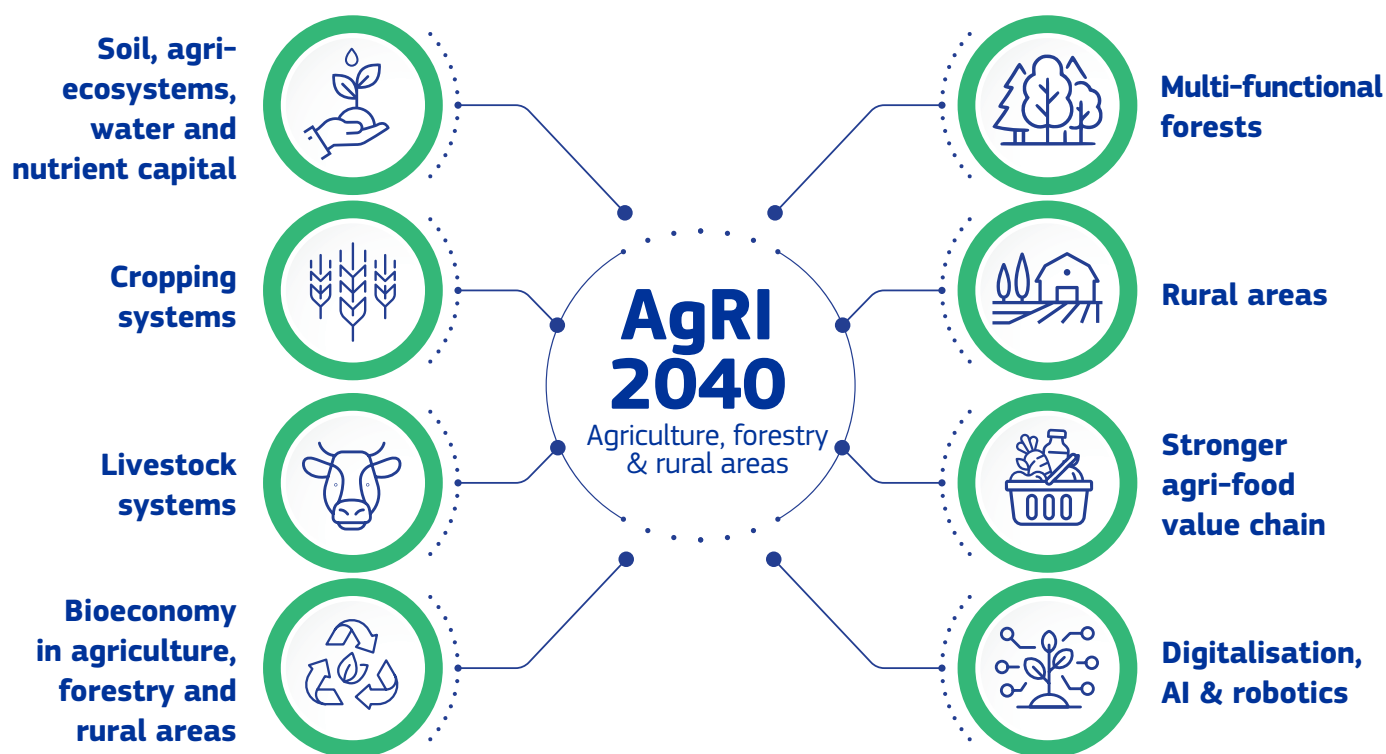


AgRI 2040

AgRI 2040 provides an overarching framework for research and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas, which will help identify Research & Innovation areas of actions, mobilise funding, while providing a coherent governance structure.

AgRI 2040 proposes eight preliminary areas of action, reflecting priorities identified through the Vision for Agriculture and Food.

8 areas of action



The eight preliminary areas of action **reflect the needs already identified through the vision for agriculture and food**, the public consultation, SCAR inputs and the Staff Working Document accompanying this Communication.

Together, these areas provide a **common direction for future research and innovation**, while allowing priorities to evolve in response to **scientific developments, stakeholder needs and the changing global context**.



Food 2040

Food 2040 is the research and innovation framework for food systems, including fisheries and aquaculture. Building on Food 2030, it will support competitive, sustainable and resilient food systems and strengthen the links between R&I priorities, implementation and the uptake of results in policy, practice and the market.

Food 2040 will develop six areas of action to implement the priorities of the Strategic Approach, develop R&I activities around identified needs.

6 areas of action



These areas of action were shaped **through extensive stakeholder engagement, including workshops, experts reports and an EU-wide survey**, whose results are summarised in the [Building Food 2040](#) report. Further details are provided in the Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the Communication.



Combining AgRI 2040 and Food 2040 for better results

The Strategic Approach takes a **full value-chain perspective**, recognising the interconnections between agriculture, forestry, food systems and the wider rural economy.

It brings together two closely interconnected frameworks:

AgRI 2040, covering agriculture, forestry and rural areas, and **Food 2040**, covering food systems, including fisheries and aquaculture.

Together, they provide a coherent R&I framework to address shared challenges across the agri-food sector and deliver benefits for people, businesses and rural communities.

From research to concrete impacts

→ For citizens:

safer, healthier and more affordable food.

→ For farmers and foresters:

better equipped to respond to climate pressures, rising costs and changing market needs.

→ For rural communities:

more resilient and attractive places to live, with locally adapted innovation and new opportunities.

→ For innovators and businesses:

stronger pathways from research to market, supporting scale-up and industrial deployment.



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