

#TRENDY THURSDAY

AGRICULTURE

Commission tables first EU soil law, slammed for 'lacking ambition'

The Commission has proposed a new soil monitoring law, aiming to regulate soil health at an EU level for the first time. However, Green lawmakers and campaigners argue that the proposal falls short of the initial ambition to grant soil a protected status similar to air and water, lacking binding targets or obligations for member states. Critics suspect the law was weakened due to lobbying by the center-right party group EPP, while the food industry points out a financing gap to meet the EU's ambitions for better soil health.

HEALTH

EU parliament moves closer to agreeing Medicines Agency's fee system

The Parliament's health committee has approved an update to the fee system for the European Medicines Agency (EMA) to simplify and modernize it. The objective is to streamline the agency's work and ensure proper funding while maintaining regulatory flexibility. The Council has also endorsed a more modern fee structure, recognizing the need to align fees with costs and address discrepancies. The proposal will now move forward for adoption by the Parliament.

AGRICULTURE

EU Commission takes more time on patentability of gene-edited plants

The Commission has deferred the decision on patentability of gene-edited plants, pushing back possible actions until 2026. Intellectual property rights for seeds and breeding have been a contentious issue, with concerns about limiting farmers' access. The Commission will conduct a market analysis to monitor the impact of patents, aiming for a balanced approach that ensures accessibility while supporting innovation in plant breeding.

ECONOMY

Single Currency Package: new proposals to support the use of cash and to propose a framework for a digital euro à

The Commission has presented a Single Currency Package proposing new measures to support the use of cash and establish a framework for a digital euro. The package aims to ensure the continued acceptance and accessibility of cash while exploring the potential of a digital euro as a complement to existing payment options. The proposals include legislative measures to safeguard the role of cash and establish the legal framework for a digital euro, giving consumers more payment choices and strengthening the international role of the euro.

DIGITAL

Data Act: EU institutions finalise agreement on industrial data law

The Commission proposed a new source of income for the EU budget based on corporate profits, alongside adjustments to previous revenue streams. The proposal aims to repay the debt incurred from the NextGenerationEU recovery plan. The new contribution would be temporary and later replaced by a framework for income taxation. The package of own resources, including the proposed changes, is expected to generate around €36 billion annually by 2024. While some EU lawmakers welcomed the proposal, civil society organizations criticized the lack of alternative revenue streams.

AGRICULTURE

Commission aims for 'paradigm shift' with upcoming food systems law

The Commission plans to introduce a food systems law aiming to bring about a "paradigm shift" in food production and consumption patterns, integrating sustainability into food-related policies. However, concrete measures and the specific focus of the legislation are still unclear. Stakeholders emphasize the need for tangible targets and changes in dietary patterns to achieve sustainability and address climate change and resource use issues.