

Dutch Farmers Protest Climate Policies They Say Could Drive Them Out of Business and Fuel Global Hunger Crisis

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by [Michael Nevradakis, Ph.D., The Defender](#)

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Dutch farmers are protesting new climate policies they say will force them to kill off livestock and drive them out of business – policies which some argue also will drive up [consumer food prices](#) and contribute to the [global hunger crisis](#).

The new Dutch policy stems from a [2019 court order](#) that nitrogen-compound pollution in the Netherlands “will have to be cut by 70% to 80%.”

But as [Dutch News reported](#):

“The government’s strategy to take a regional approach to the issue will lead to major problems in parts of Gelderland and Noord-Brabant, where livestock farming is concentrated and a

number of vulnerable habitats are being seriously damaged.

“To meet the new rules, the amount of livestock farming will have to be reduced drastically, and that means some farmers will have to be bought out and shut down their operations.”

According to a [recent report](#) by journalist Kim Iversen, “the farmers in the most regulated areas would essentially be put out of business.”

Iversen said farmers who do not “voluntarily” accept the government’s proposal may have their land seized outright.

“With the latest round of tightening of regulations, the Dutch government has announced more multi-billion-dollar buyout arrangements but has also stated they will expropriate the land from farmers who do not comply,” Iversen said. “They’ll take their land.”

Iversen quoted Henk Staghouwer, the Dutch minister of agriculture, nature and food quality, who said, “There is not a future for all farmers within this approach.”

Staghouwer offered to begin negotiations with the farmers, Iversen said, “but only on the condition the participants condemn the demonstrations” taking place in response to the new policies.

But as Iversen [reported](#), the protests haven’t died down.

Protesting farmers [sprayed manure](#) on a local town hall and [dumped a truckload of manure](#) in front of the home of Dutch minister of nature and nitrogen policy. Some farmers even [brought their cows](#) to a protest outside the Dutch parliament.

Others have blocked [roads](#) and [highways](#), [causing](#) “major traffic jams,” and blockaded parts of the German-Dutch border, [with help](#) from freight and dock workers and fishermen.

In response, police fired tear gas on demonstrating farmers and military tanks were brought in to try and clear the blockades.

Similar to [events](#) that transpired in Canada during the truckers' convoy there earlier this year, the Dutch government also called in tow truck companies to remove tractors, but according to Iversen, "they're refusing to get involved."

Meanwhile, Dutch media described the protests as "extremist" and the work of "militants," Iversen said, leading farmers to also blockade the headquarters of media outlets.

In the midst of the protests, the country's Farmer-Citizen political party has soared to second place, according to a [recent poll](#). The party, which holds one seat in the Dutch parliament today, would increase its share to 11 seats if elections were held today, Iversen said.

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