

Dutch farmers clog highways in protest at politicians labeling them climate change problem



Amsterdam, October 2 (RHC)-- Dutch farmers blocked hundreds of miles of major roads with their tractors to protest what they say are attempts to scapegoat their industry and paint them as a “problem” that needs fixing in discussions over climate change.

Up to 10,000 farmers took to the highways in their tractors to slowly make their way to The Hague causing 620 miles (998 km) of traffic jams and the worst morning commute in the country’s history. Some farmers managed to avoid the massive traffic jam by driving along the North Sea beaches to reach the city.

In a statement, police said they “respect that farmers are standing up for their interest” and that they were trying to facilitate the protest as well as they could, but urged tractor drivers to follow instructions of traffic guides on the routes.

No official measures against farmers have yet been announced, but one party has suggested that the Netherlands should cut back 50 percent on the number of live animals produced every year. A broad package of measures includes a proposal to grant financial aid to farmers who want to cease their operations or adopt greener practices, the Associated Press reported.

“Farmers and growers are sick of being painted as a ‘problem’ that needs a ‘solution,’” Dirk Bruins of industry group LTO said in a statement. “This is about our families, our future, the future of our children. It’s about our way of life,” sheep farmer Bart Kemp told the crowds of farmers gathered in The Hague and called for a “new era in which the food producers of the Netherlands are listened to.”

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