

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

~~COM(74) 1825 final~~

Brussels, 7 November 1974

Proposal for a

COUNCIL DECISION

extending the period of operation of the
system of minimum prices for potatoes and
certain vinegars

(submitted to the Council by the Commission)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. Pursuant to the second sentence of Article 44(6) of the EEC Treaty, the Council, by its Decision of 20 December 1969 (OJ No L 328, 30 December 1969, p. 11) extended in respect of the Member States concerned the period during which the system of minimum prices effective on 31 December 1969 was to apply. However, in the case of vinegar and substitutes for vinegar imported into Germany and of seed potatoes and certain fishery products imported into France, it also authorised the levying of countervailing charges in place of minimum prices.
2. The Council Decision of 20 December 1969, which was to apply until 31 December 1970 at the latest, was extended successively by the Decisions of 15 December 1970 (OJ No L 281, 27 December 1970, p. 25), of 29 December 1971 (OJ No L 2, 4 January 1972, p. 23), of 19 December 1972 (OJ No L 291, 28 December 1972, p. 152) and of 17 December 1973 (OJ No L 360, 29 December 1973, p. 65).

At the time when those extensions were made, in December 1970 and December 1971, the Council took into account the fact that the authorisation granted to the Member States concerned to levy countervailing charges in place of minimum prices on wine vinegar and the fishery products specified in the Decision of 20 December 1969 had expired on 1 June 1970 and 1 February 1971, the respective dates from which took effect Council Regulation (EEC) No. 816/70 of 28 April 1970 laying down additional provisions for the common organisation of the market in wine (OJ No L 99, 5 May 1970, p. 1) and Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2142/70 of 20 October 1970 on the common organisation of the market in fishery products (OJ No L 236, 27 October 1970, p. 5).
3. At present of all the arrangements instituted under Article 44 of the EEC Treaty, only the following are still in effect:
 - (a) charges replacing minimum prices: in France, seed potatoes and in Germany, vinegar and substitutes for vinegar, other than wine vinegar;
 - (b) minimum prices: in France, ware potatoes and in France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg, new potatoes. The system of minimum prices is at present applied: for ware potatoes, in France, throughout the year; for new potatoes, in France, from 15 May to 30 June, in Belgium and Luxembourg, from 1 June to 31 July and in Germany, from 10 June to 10 August.

4. It should be noted that in the past the application of minimum prices or of charges helped alleviate difficulties arising with regard to those products.

As regards charges levied instead of minimum prices, (on seed potatoes and vinegar other than wine vinegar) the figures in the attached tables show a favourable trend.

The application of the system of minimum prices for seed potatoes (France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany) involved in 1974 the closing of frontiers at certain times of the year: in France, from 28 May to 5 June and from 21 June to 25 June and in Germany, from 1 July to 17 July and from 23 July to 10 August. Nonetheless, trade in new potatoes over the year may be considered by and large, to have been normal.

Admittedly, in the case of ware potatoes, together with the application of the system of minimum prices, France closed its frontier from 23 July to 24 October 1974 to imports from the EEC countries and Greece.

However, it has to be recognised that the import requirements of France, which for this product is predominantly an exporting country, are limited in normal years.

5. (a) The Council Decision of 17 December 1973 extended the period during which systems of minimum prices or countervailing charges in place of minimum prices might be applied until such time as a common organisation of the markets in the products in question could be established or until 31 December 1974, whichever was the earlier. It should be noted that the Council is at present discussing a proposal for a common organisation of the market in alcohol, which would cover spirit vinegar, and that work is in progress on measures to establish a common organisation of the market in vinegar other than wine or spirit vinegar.
- (b) As regards potatoes, however, it has not yet been possible to submit to the Council a proposal for a common organisation of the market. It must be remembered that the problems created by the particular characteristics of this market have been aggravated by the enlargement of the Community since in the United Kingdom there exists a national organisation of the market which comprises a system of individual quotas, guaranteed prices and deficiency payments.

In view of the above, the period of validity of the Council Decision of 17 December 1973 extending the system of minimum prices should be extended in respect of ~~potatoes and certain vinegars~~ until 31 December 1975 at the latest. This is the purpose of the proposal for a decision attached hereto.

ANNEX I

FRANCE - IMPORTS

Seed potatoes

1,000 kg

Origin	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
Germany	634	1,499	311	507	174	858	331	666
BLEU	727	716	849	544	739	644	580	596
Netherlands	58,577	79,240	47,881	61,474	59,565	49,763	61,359	67,584
Italy	-	-	45	16	19	19	13	24
Denmark	1,361	6,735	1,047	1,021	1,237	6,108	240*	704
United Kingdom	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ireland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
EEC as originally constituted	59,938	31,455	49,085	62,521	60,497	51,284	62,283	68,870
(including Denmark)	61,299	88,190	50,133	63,562	61,734	57,392	62,523	69,574
World	61,992	90,183	50,645	64,305	62,984	59,236	64,261	72,646

* The probable reason for this extremely low figure is the objections on plant health grounds raised by France.

ANNEX IIGERMANY - IMPORTSVinegar

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Origin	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
France	229	306	1,401	521	1,200	706
BLEU	-	-	171	145	-	-
Netherlands	-	30	-	-	-	3,596
Italy	545	1,116	1,256	1,855	1,995	2,334
New Member States	-	-	-	-	-	-
EEC	774	1,563	3,024	3,084	3,532	7,268
World	1,371	2,153	3,341	3,546	3,979	8,063

Source: Nimexe analytical tables for 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972
 Statistisches Bundesamt, Series 2, 1973

NB: This table does not distinguish between wine vinegar and other vinegar.

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extending the period of operation of the
system of minimum prices for potatoes
and certain vinegars.

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,
and in particular Article 44 thereof;

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission;

Having regard to the Opinion of the European Parliament;

Whereas, by its Decision of 4 April 1962⁽¹⁾ on minimum prices, the Council laid down objective criteria for the establishment of minimum price systems and for the fixing of such prices;

Whereas, by its Decision of 20 December 1969⁽²⁾, the Council extended, in respect of the Member States concerned, the period during which the system of minimum prices effective on 31 December 1969 was to apply; whereas, in the case of vinegar and substitutes for vinegar other than wine vinegar imported into Germany and of seed potatoes and certain fishery products imported into France, however it authorised in place of minimum prices the levying of countervailing charges;

Whereas the Decision of 20 December 1969, which was to apply until not later than 31 December 1970, was extended successively by the Decision of 15 December 1970⁽³⁾, the Decision of 20 December 1971⁽⁴⁾, the Decision of 19 December 1972⁽⁵⁾ and the Decision of 17 December 1973⁽⁶⁾;

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- (1) OJ No 30, 20 April, 1962, p. 995/62
(2) OJ No L 328, 30 December 1969, p. 11.
(3) OJ No L 281, 27 December 1970, p. 25
(4) OJ No L 2, 4 January 1972, p. 23
(5) OJ No L 291, 28 December 1972, p. 152
(6) OJ No L 360, 29 December 1973, p. 65

Whereas, at the time when those extensions were made, in December 1970 and December 1971, the Council took into account the fact that the authorisation granted to the Member States concerned to levy countervailing charges in place of minimum prices on wine vinegar and the fishery products specified in the Decision of 20 December 1969 had expired on 1 June 1970 and 1 February 1971, the respective dates from which took effect Council Regulation (EEC) No. 816/70⁽⁷⁾ of 28 April 1970 laying down additional provisions for the common organisation of the market in wine and Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2142/70⁽⁸⁾ of 20 October 1970 on the common organisation of the market in fishery products;

Whereas no common organization of the markets in the products to which that Decision still applies, namely potatoes, including seed potatoes, and vinegar other than wine vinegar and substitutes for vinegar, will have been established by 31 December 1974; whereas the period of validity of the Decision of 20 December 1969 should be extended for a period sufficiently long to allow measures to that effect to be introduced but not in any event beyond 31 December 1975,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

In Article 3 of the Council Decision of 20 December 1969 on the system of minimum prices, as last amended by the Decision of 17 December 1973, the date "31 December 1974" is replaced by the date "31 December 1975".

Article 2

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council

The President

(7) OJ No L 99, 5 May 1970, p. 1

(8) OJ No L 236, 27 October 1970, p. 5