

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(77) 98 final

Brussels, 22nd March 1977

Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION

on the equivalence of seed potatoes produced in third countries

(submitted to the Council by the Commission)

COM(77) 98 final

Explanatory memorandum

For several years, Italy has imported seed potatoes from Canada.

In acceptance with Council Directive 66/403/EEC on the marketing of seed potatoes harvested in third countries and intended for marketing within the Community, it is necessary to determinate the equivalence of such seed potatoes.

In the past Member States were free to take equivalence decisions themselves ; this right was due to expire on 1st July 1975. By Directive 76/307/EEC, the Council extended the period of the validity of equivalences established nationally until 31 December 1976, in order to permit Community Authorities to examine, particularly for Canada, the conditions of seed potato production and to make a decision on possible equivalence for this Country.

Now enquiries to evaluate a community equivalence of seed potatoes harvested in Canada have been carried out with the result that it seems advisable to grant an equivalence to this Country, limiting however the effect of this equivalence solely to Italy for plant health reasons.

The enclose Draft Proposal of the Commission takes this conclusion into account.

Council Decision of _____ on the equivalence of seed potatoes produced
in third countries

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,

Having regard to Council Directive 66/403/EEC of 14 June 1966 on the marketing of seed potatoes (1), as last amended by Directive 76/307/EEC (2), and in particular Article 15 (1) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Whereas there are rules in Canada providing for a varietal and qualitative control of seed potatoes; whereas examination of those rules and the manner in which they are applied has shown that the conditions governing seed potatoes harvested and controlled in that country as regards their characteristics, and the arrangements for their inspection, for ensuring their identity, for marking and for control afford the same assurances as the conditions and arrangements applicable to seed potatoes harvested and controlled within the Community;

Whereas, however, this determination of equivalence does not eliminate the risk that certain potato diseases which are known in Canada and are not widespread in the Community may be introduced into the latter as long as the campaign of eradication of these diseases in Canada has not been completely effective;

Whereas, having regard to Articles 13 (2) and 20 of the said Directive, the effects of the determination of equivalence should be limited to those territories of the Community where experience over many years, including that under the system of national equivalence, has shown that seed potatoes produced in Canada have not created problems for the protection of plant health under the specific ecological conditions of these territories;

Whereas this Decision does not prevent Community findings from being revoked nor the period of their validity from not being extended if it becomes apparent that the conditions on which such findings are based are not or are no longer satisfied;

(1) OJ No 125, 11.7.1966, p. 2320/66

(2) OJ No L 72, 18.3.1976, p. 16

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Whereas therefore further practical information on seed potatoes produced in Canada should be obtained by growing and checking samples of such seed as part of comparative Community tests,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION :

Article 1

It is hereby declared that, provided that the special conditions laid down in the Annex hereto are satisfied, the seed potatoes which are harvested in the country specified in the Annex and officially controlled by the authority listed therein and which belong to the categories specified therein, are equivalent, as regards the Member State specified in the Annex, to seed potatoes of corresponding categories harvested within the Community and comply with Directive 66/403/EEC.

Article 2

This Decision shall apply from 1 January 1977 to 30 June 1978.

Article 3

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

ANNEX

Country	Service	Member State	Categories		Special conditions
			In the country concerned	In the Community	
1	2	3	4	5	6
Canada	Department of Agriculture Plant Protection Division Ottawa	Italy	Foundation	Basic seed potatoes	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
			Certified	Certified seed po- tatoes	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Special conditions

784/VI/77-VI

1. Seed potatoes are harvested in the following regions:
New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.
2. Seed potatoes shall be officially certified and their containers officially marked and sealed in accordance with national provisions. Seed potatoes and the details on the label shall meet at least the requirements of Community rules and conform to the European standard for seed potatoes recommended by the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Foodstuffs of the Economic Commission for Europe.
3. Field inspection shall be carried out by State authorities or by any legal person whether governed by public or by private law, acting under the responsibility of such authorities, provided that such person derives no private gain from the result of the inspection.
4. Any chemical treatment of the seed potatoes shall be noted either on the official label or on a special label and on the container or inside it.
5. The colour of the label shall be :
 - white for basic seed potatoes;
 - blue for certified seed potatoes;
6. The label states the region of production.
7. The label states that EEC rules and standards are satisfied and particularly **nil tolerance** for spindle tuber and *Corynebacterium sepedonicum*.
8. All information shall be given in at least one of the official languages of the European Communities.