

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

1680th meeting of the Council

- Agriculture -

Brussels, 19 July 1993

The official press release was unavailable. A summary of the meeting has been reproduced from the Bulletin of the European Communities, No. 7/8-1993.

1680th meeting

1.6.5. Agriculture (Brussels, 19 July).

Previous meeting: Bull. EC 6-1993, point 1.6.9

President: Mr Bourgeois, Belgian Minister for Agriculture.

Commission: Mr Steichen.

Main items

- Special reference quantity for certain milk producers (SLOM III): Regulation adopted (→ point 1.2.165).**
- Offer of compensation to certain milk producers: proposal for a Regulation agreed (→ point 1.2.166).**
- Standard qualities for cereals: Regulation adopted (→ point 1.2.151).**
- Feedingstuffs intended for particular nutritional purposes: proposal for a Directive agreed (→ point 1.2.15).**

Other business

- Grant of agrimonetary aid: exchange of views.**
- Uruguay Round — Agricultural aspects: progress report.**
- Control of residues in meat: discussed in detail.**
- Funding of programmes to combat certain diseases in the veterinary sector: wide-ranging debate and conclusions of the Presidency.**
- Protection of animals during transport: exchange of views.**
- Animal protection: discussed.**

1.2.165. Council Regulation (EEC) No 2055/93 allocating a special reference quantity to certain producers of milk and milk products.

Reference: Council Regulation (EEC) No 1078/77 introducing a system of premiums for the non-marketing of milk and milk products and for the conversion of dairy herds: OJ L 131, 26.5.1977

Commission proposal: OJ C 107, 17.4.1993; COM(93) 89; Bull. EC 3-1993, point 1.2.123

Parliament opinion: OJ C 176, 28.6.1993; Bull. EC 5-1993, point 1.2.124

Adopted on 19 July. The Regulation grants quotas to producers who took over all or part of a farm the previous holder of which had entered into a non-marketing or conversion commitment.

OJ L 187, 29.7.1993

1.2.166. Council Regulation (EEC) No 2187/93 providing for an offer of compensation to certain producers of milk and milk products temporarily prevented from carrying on their trade.

Reference: Judgment of the Court of Justice of 19 May 1992 (Joined Cases C-104/89 and C-37/90): OJ C 152, 17.6.1992; Bull. EC 6-1992, point 1.7.31

Commission proposal: OJ C 157, 9.6.1993; COM(93) 161; Bull. EC 4-1993, point 1.2.124

Economic and Social Committee opinion: Bull. EC 6-1993, point 1.2.194

Endorsed by Parliament on 16 July, subject to amendments in particular compelling respect for the agricultural guideline.

OJ C 255, 20.9.1993

Agreed by the Council on 19 July.

Formally adopted on 22 July. Following the Court's judgment ordering the Community to make good the losses of milk producers who, as a result of an earlier non-marketing or conversion commitment, were not allocated milk quotas in 1984, the Regulation introduces compensation provisions.

OJ L 196, 5.8.1993

EAGGF Guarantee Section

1.2.167. Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 386/90 on the monitoring carried out at the time of export of agricultural products receiving refunds or other amounts.

Regulation to be amended: Council Regulation (EEC) No 386/90: OJ L 42, 16.2.1990; Bull. EC 1/2-1990, point 1.4.18

Adopted by the Commission on 19 July. Regulation (EEC) No 386/90 requires each customs office to make a physical check on at least 5% per year of operations giving rise to refunds. The proposal is for this rate to be changed from applying to each agricultural product sector to applying to agricultural products as a whole so that offices will be able to concentrate their checks on sectors presenting the most risk.

OJ C 218, 12.8.1993; COM(93) 339

Market organization

Cereals

1.2.151. Council Regulation (EEC) No 2054/93 amending Regulation (EEC) No 2731/75 fixing standard qualities for common wheat, rye, barley, maize, sorghum and durum wheat.

Commission proposal: OJ C 112, 22.4.1993; COM(93) 122; Bull. EC 3-1993, point 1.2.117

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Bull. EC 7/8-1993

Economic and Social Committee opinion: OJ C 201, 26.7.1993; Bull. EC 5-1993, point 1.2.116
Parliament opinion: OJ C 194, 19.7.1993; Bull. EC 6-1993, point 1.2.188

Adopted on 19 July. The Regulation sets a single standard quality for each cereal.

OJ L 187, 29.7.1993

1.2.15. Proposal for a Council Regulation on feedingstuffs intended for particular nutritional purposes.

Commission proposal: OJ C 231, 9.9.1992; COM(92) 324; Bull. EC 7/8-1992, point 1.3.181

Parliament opinion: OJ C 21, 25.1.1993; Bull. EC 12-1992, point 1.3.220

Economic and Social Committee opinion: OJ C 73, 15.3.1993; Bull. EC 1/2-1993, point 1.2.25

Agreed by the Council (agriculture) on 19 July. The aim of this proposal is to lay down specific rules governing the production, marketing and monitoring of dietetic feedingstuffs in order to make it possible to distinguish between them and other types of feedingstuffs. The Council agreement provides for the text to be adopted in the form of a directive.

Bull. EC 7/8-1993

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Bruxelles, le 16 juillet 1993

**NOTE BIO(93)191 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC.: AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE PAROLE**

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**CONSEIL AGRICULTURE (Bruxelles, les 19 et 20 juillet 1993)
(G. Kiely)**

Le Conseil des Communautés Européennes tiendra sa 1680ème session - Agriculture - lundi 19 juillet à partir de 15h et éventuellement mardi 20 juillet 1993 au Bâtiment Charlemagne à Bruxelles sous la présidence de Mr Bourgeois, Ministre de l'Agriculture de Belgique. L'ordre du jour comportera les points suivants:

Approbation de la liste des points "A".

Sous points "A" figureront entre autres

Montant de l'aide aux producteurs de houblon pour la récolte 1992 (doc. COM(93) 223)

La délégation néerlandaise souhaite le maintien d'une aide uniforme pour toutes les variétés, la délégation française demandant à la Commission d'examiner la possibilité de prévoir une aide différenciée en faveur des variétés extra-amère.

Aide pour le lin et le chauvre (doc.COM(93)309)

Modification du règlement 619/71. Ce règlement, qui fixe la répartition de l'aide entre le producteur et le transformateur, fait suite à l'accord du 27 mai sur le paquet "prix".

Prix garantis applicables au sucre de canne originaire des Etats ACP et l'Inde.

Il s'agit d'autoriser la Commission à négocier les prix garantis pour la période de livraison 1993-1994

Primes d'abandon définitif des superficies viticoles (doc. COM(93)85)

Le Conseil est invité à se prononcer sur la reconduction du régime actuel d'abandon des superficies viticoles.

Mesures spécifiques concernant certains produits agricoles en faveur des îles grecques de la Mer Egée. (doc. COM(92)569)

L'article 15 du règlement a été amendé pour préciser que les ajustements appropriés que la Commission proposera après 3 ans, pourront comporter l'introduction d'une dégressivité des aides et des limitations dans le temps.

POINTS "B"

Attribution d'une quantité de référence à certains producteurs de lait (doc. COM(93) 89 final)

Offre d'une indemnisation à certains producteurs de lait (SLOM I et II) (doc. COM(93)161)

Le Conseil sera appelé à se prononcer sur la proposition de faire une offre transactionnelle aux producteurs SLOM I et II qui ont été empêchés temporairement d'exercer leur activité et plus particulièrement sur le niveau de l'indemnisation.

Fixation des qualités types de Céréales (doc. COM(93)122)

Suite à l'adoption du nouveau règlement de base portant organisation commune de marché des céréales, il convient d'adapter les dispositions du règlement fixant les qualités types des céréales pour lesquelles les prix communs sont fixés.

Octroi d'une aide Agri-monnaire (doc. COM(93) 297)

Suite aux différents réalignements monétaires intervenus ces derniers six mois, la Commission se propose d'octroyer une aide Agri-monnaire à certains pays, pénalisés par ces réalignements.

La proposition soulève des problèmes complexes et politiquement sensibles et nécessite un examen approfondi.

Protection des animaux pendant le transport (doc. COM(93)330)

Il est proposé d'instaurer des règles spécifiques concernant les périodes de repos, les intervalles pour l'alimentation et l'abreuvement, les normes de densité de chargement et les normes applicable aux moyens de transport d'animaux.

Points "Divers"

Stimulateurs de croissance dans l'élevage (doc. COM(93)167)

A l'issue d'une enquête en profondeur dans les Etats Membres sur la situation du contrôle des résidus, notamment des hormones et des bêta-agonistes, la Commission propose un série de mesures, dont de nouvelles dispositions législatives, afin de mieux combattre l'usage illégal des substances anabolisantes et l'usage impropre des médicaments vétérinaires autorisés.

Protection des animaux

A la demande de la délégation danoise, une attention particulière est demandée aux normes minimales pour la protection des poules pondeuses élevées en batterie.

Régime de gel des terres

La délégation UK évoquera le problème des agriculteurs qui se sont engagés dans le régime du gel des terres à cinq ans établi en 1988 et dont les contrats viendront à échéances le 1er août 1993.

Amitiés,

B. DETHOMAS

Brussels, 20 July 1992

NOTE BIO (93) 191 (suite 1 et fin) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC: AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE PAROLE

Council of Agricultural Ministers, Brussels, 19 July 1993
(G. Kiely)

Opening the meeting the Presidency outlined some priorities including:

- reform of the wine regime and examine need of reform in other areas
- to examine what needs to be done to adopt reform
- to implement decisions taken
- Structural Funds
- Uruguay Round
- hormone ban

The Presidency also highlighted some more general priorities i.e.

- to ensure that EC legislation is applied uniformly throughout the Community
- financial solidarity and to ensure that national measures fit within an EC framework
- respect of budgetary limits
- promote quality policy
- the image of agriculture in the Community (which will be the topic for the Informal Council)

SLOM III:

Council adopted a decision on SLOM III which responds to the Court judgement and will allow the granting of a quota to producers who became transferees of a premium, through the acquisition of a holding subject to a non-production undertaking, where they already had received a reference quantity in respect of another holding when the milk quota regime was introduced.

Compensation to certain producers of milk and milk products temporarily prevented from carrying on their trade.

As a result of Court decision in May 1992, there are potentially 12,000 beneficiaries i.e. producers who were excluded from having a quota due to their participation in a dairy board conversion or a non-marketing scheme in 1983 i.e. reference year for the milk quota.

The Commission has made a proposal to compensate these producers for their loss in revenue during the period 1984/85 to 1990/91. The level of compensation proposed per 100 kg of milk varies depending on the level of milk production and is calculated on an annual basis - it varies from 5.7 ecu/100 kg to 10.7 ecu/100 kg.

Mr Steichen pointed out to Council that there was a legal obligation on Council to resolve the matter and felt that the offer on the table should resolve most of the cases - otherwise he said there is the possibility of thousands of cases going to Court. He urged Council to adopt the proposal - otherwise taking account of legal fees, the cost could be much higher. Furthermore he wants the cost to be borne by the 1993 budget.

While many Ministers were unhappy with having to give this compensation, most recognised the logic of a standard payment and the legal obligation to provide such a payment. A number of Ministers believed that the compensation was too high. Council supported the proposal and will be adopted after a scrutiny of the text.

Standard Quality for cereals:

This proposal sets out the standard quality for which the intervention price and the threshold price for common wheat are fixed, including 14% moisture, 2% broken grains, 1% sprouted grains, 76 kg specific weight per hectolitre. This proposal is purely of a technical nature and merely introduces a single standard quality for common wheat.

Member States recognised the technical nature of the proposal although some urged stricter quality.

Council adopted the proposal.

Agri-monetary aid:

This proposal lays down limits, conditions and procedures to be applied for compensatory aid eligible for Community co-financing which may be granted by Member States with floating currencies and for national compensation aid granted by Member States where prices have dropped as a result of an increase in the correcting factor.

Council felt that further technical work needed to be done on this dossier before Council could adopt it and hope to adopt it in September.

GATT:

The Commissioner informed Council of the contacts taking place on the market access question and insisted that the Community's offer was in accordance with the Dunkel text and therefore there is no need to adjust it. He also pointed to the dangers of attempting to renegotiate Blair House - improvements would be very difficult to achieve. He also pointed out that a GATT deal would legitimise the CAP mechanisms internationally and would open up new markets for Community exports. Not all delegations spoke, but those who did, tended to repeat points already made at previous Councils i.e. problems with the 21% reduction in subsidised exports, risk to Community preference for Mediterranean products etc.

One delegation with support from one or two others requested a Jumbo Council in Sept. on the question of GATT - to which the Presidency expressed an openness, but was not in a position to give an immediate response.

Hormones:

Mr Steichen introduced the communication on the control of residues in meat. Mr Steichen pointed out that there is abuse of hormones and there existed also certain weaknesses in controls. There would have to be effective sanctions against farmers abusing these substances i.e. withdrawal of premiums against abattoirs accepting hormoned cattle and against feed compounders using hormones. He also felt that beta-agonists should be totally banned except for horses and pets.

Council unanimously endorsed the thrust of the Commission's communication emphasising the need to take coherent and firm action to protect the image of agricultural products and to allay the fears of consumers. Many Ministers however resume their position until the Commission proposals are put forward.

Problems of funding of programmes for controlling certain diseases:

The Commission estimates the cost of implementing a certain number of disease programmes at 320 mecu in 1993, whereas only 115 mecu has been made available in the budget and that application of budgetary discipline implies that certain programmes could only be financed from 1995.

Mr Steichen emphasised the need to combat disease to ensure problems do not develop in the internal market. He also told Council that he intended making proposals to ensure better discipline and more efficient use of funds in this area. Many Ministers emphasised the need of having sufficient funds to combat/eradicate disease, although some argued in favour of prioritising on the basis of the funds available or of transferring from other areas (which is impossible according to Mr Steichen). The Presidency agreed to seek 20 MECU in the 1993 budget for priority cases.

Animal Welfare:

Mr Steichen outlined details of the new measures proposed in regard to animal transport, in particular regarding delays between watering, feeding, space per animal etc. Ministers welcomed the proposals from the Commission but some suggested an absolute time limit on journeys and also that export refunds on live animals should be reduced to discourage live exports.

A number of delegations also urged the Commission to put forward its report on battery hens which would establish minimum standards.

Set-aside

The UK Minister raised the problem of the 5 year set-aside participants who are now coming to the end of their set aside contract and whether they could be given an assurance now which would discourage them from ploughing up their land. The Commission pointed out that many of these can be covered by the non-rotational set-aside (18% in UK). Others could be covered by the 20 year regime of the accompanying measures programme, but the UK has not yet submitted its programme. Furthermore, he said the Commission will present its proposals next week (28 July) on the future set-aside regime, which may include a voluntary paid level of set-aside greater than 15%, 18% or 20% i.e. higher than present obligatory levels.

Durum wheat: (fr)

The French Minister raised a question on the supplies of durum wheat to which the Commissioner responded that there were ample stocks in intervention, should any difficulties arise on the market.

Blackcurrant imports (fr):

France complained about the level of blackcurrant imports from Eastern Europe. The Commission has already proposed a system of compensatory amounts if prices of imports are too low. Something similar could apply to fresh imports.

Spanish export problems (Sp)

The Spanish Minister complained about the attacks on Spanish exports of fruit and vegetables in France. He said that the level of intimidation on a systematic basis by roaming gangs was totally unacceptable and called on the French Government to restore order.

Mr Steichen expressed concern on this matter also and described the intimidatory action by these farmers as a serious threat to the internal market. He has already written to the French Government insisting that the authorities ensure the free circulation of goods.

The French delegation assured Council that all means at the Government's disposal would be used to prevent a continuation of these actions.

Amitiés,

B. DETHOMAS