

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

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1441st meeting of the Council
- Agriculture -
Brussels, 27 November 1990

President:

Mr Vito SACCOMANDI

Minister for Agriculture
of the Italian Republic

Italy:

Mr Vito SACCOMANDI	Minister for Agriculture
Mr Francesco CIMINO	State Secretary for Agriculture and Forestry
Mr Paolo BRUNO	State Secretary for Health

Luxembourg:

Mr René STEICHEN	Minister for Agriculture and Viticulture
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Netherlands:

Mr Piet BUKMAN	Minister for Agriculture, Nature Protection and Fisheries
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Portugal:

Mr Arlindo CUNHA	Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
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United Kingdom:

Mr David CURRY	Parliamentary Secretary, Agriculture
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Commission:

Mr R. MAC SHARRY	Member
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OILS AND FATS

After taking note of the Opinion of the European Parliament and on the basis of a compromise by the Presidency, the Council adopted a package of measures the purpose of which was, inter alia, to implement the appropriate provisions to avoid imbalances on the olive oil market as a result of the expiry on 31 December 1990 of the standstill period in Spain and Portugal.

These measures included, inter alia:

- extending the stabilizing mechanism to the intervention price for olive oil
- granting additional aid (ECU 3/100 kg) for production by small-scale producers
- increasing the quantity of olive oil laid down for the purposes of defining small-scale producers, namely 500 kg instead of 400 kg
- introduction of consumption aid in Spain (ECU 43/100 kg) and Portugal (ECU 48/100 kg)
- improving the system for paying advances in respect of production aid.

The Council also adopted, for the marketing year 1990/1991 due to start on 1 December 1990, the Regulation fixing the representative market price and threshold price for olive oil.

These prices are as follows:

- representative market price : ECU 190,61/100 kg
- threshold price : ECU 189,43/100 kg

The level of consumption aid - for the Community of Ten - for the abovementioned marketing year was therefore fixed at ECU 61/100 kg.

On this aid the following percentages would be retained:

- 1,4% to finance trade bodies;
- 4% for actions to promote consumption.

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TABLE OLIVES

The Council examined the Commission's report on the current situation of the Community market and of the world market in table olives and prospects for their development.

Then, pending the Opinion of the European Parliament, the Council held an initial exchange of views on the proposal concerning measures to develop the consumption of table olives, by means, in particular, of Community participation in the financing of appropriate actions implemented by representatives groups.

As a more detailed study of the dossier was necessary, the Council instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture to pursue its work in that field.

TRANSITION TO THE SECOND STAGE IN THE ACCESSION OF PORTUGAL
(AGRICULTURE)

The Council, after noting the Opinion of the European Parliament, signified its agreement to a set of measures including 23 regulations designed to facilitate the integration of sectors subject to a transition by stages (see Article 259 of the Act of Accession) in the common agricultural policy, starting with the beginning of the second stage, i.e., 1 January 1991.

The solutions adopted by the Council took into account a certain number of specific problems to be faced by Portuguese agriculture within the framework of its integration into the common agricultural policy and thus provide a response to the commitments entered into by the European Council in 1988 and the Council's statement adopted at the time of the decision on the 1989/1990 agricultural prices.

The regulations would be formally adopted at a forthcoming meeting of the Council, following finalization of the texts.

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SUGAR SECTOR

Pending the Opinion of the European Parliament, the Council held an initial exchange of views on the Commission proposal on the Community's future sugar arrangements.

In the light of the situation and prospects for development of the sugar market both in the Community and internationally, the proposal essentially aimed to maintain in its broad outlines the current arrangements for the two years to come (1991/1992 and 1992/1993).

This first examination enabled the Council to lay down some guidelines for its later discussions.

The Council instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture to pursue its work on the subject so as to enable the Council to resume its debate at its next meeting.

URUGUAY ROUND - AGRICULTURAL ASPECT

The Council was informed by the Commission on the current state of the multilateral trade negotiations, as far as agricultural aspects were concerned.

The Council confirmed the Community's position as it had defined it at its meeting on 5 and 6 November 1990 and agreed to follow the development of the negotiations closely at the Brussels conference.

FLAVOURED WINES

The Council examined the proposal for a Regulation laying down general rules on the definition, description and presentation of vermouths and other wines of fresh grapes flavoured with plants and other aromatic substances.

The Council gave particular consideration to an initial draft global compromise from the Presidency aimed at bringing together the delegations' positions so as to reach a common position to be forwarded for a second reading to the European Parliament in the framework of the co-operation procedure.

From the Council's deliberations it emerged that the draft submitted constituted a good basis for the work that the Special Committee on Agriculture had been instructed to carry out with a view to the Council's deliberations at its next meeting.

PLANT AND ANIMAL HEALTH

Pesticide residues

The Council adopted the Directive on the fixing of maximum levels for pesticide residues in and on certain products of plant origin, including fruit and vegetables.

This Directive particularly aims to:

- create a system whereby, in all the Member States, maximum compulsory levels can be fixed, applying to pesticide residues on and in fruit and vegetables currently coming under Directive 76/895/EEC;
- extend the scope of the Community measures to products not yet covered by them;
- group under a sole Community measure maximum levels for residues to be applied to fruit and vegetables, regardless of whether the treatment had been applied before or after harvesting.

The list of pesticide residues and maximum levels applicable to them was adopted by the Council.

Veterinary checks on products from third countries

The Council examined the Commission proposal laying down the principles governing the organization of veterinary checks on products entering the Community from third countries.

The fixing at Community level of common principles for the organization of checks and the internal distribution arrangements for products from third countries was especially necessary as internal border checks were to be abolished (Directive No 89/662/EEC, adopted in December 1989).

Following its deliberations, the Council noted that substantial progress had been made, but a more detailed examination of the dossier was still necessary.

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue its work towards solving the questions outstanding so as to enable the Council to adopt this proposal at its next meeting in December.

Farmed game meat and rabbit meat

The Council unanimously adopted the Directive concerning public health and animal health problems affecting the production and placing on the market of rabbit meat and farmed game meat.

This Directive aims to harmonize the public health rules applying to game and rabbit meat, and thus completes the harmonization of these rules which were already applicable in the fresh pigmeat, beef and sheepmeat and poultrymeat sectors.

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Protection against pathogens

The Council unanimously adopted the Directive laying down the general rules for the disposal and processing of animal waste, for its placing on the market and for the prevention of pathogens in feedstuffs of animal origin.

The purpose of this Directive is to harmonize the conditions for processing animal waste products and in particular certain products considered as high-risk materials with regard to the transmission of certain diseases.

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MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

The Council adopted:

- the Decision laying down the Community criteria for the eradication and monitoring of certain animal diseases.

These criteria are designed to guarantee the efficacy of the action undertaken and enable the Member States to submit to the Commission programmes intended to ensure the rapid eradication or appropriate monitoring of the diseases concerned.

- the Regulation laying down the factors to be taken into consideration in the annual accounts for the financing of intervention measures in the form of public storage by the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, Guarantee Section.

Within the framework of simplifying regulations in order to facilitate checks, the aim of this measure is to restructure the rules governing the financing of interventions for the EAGGF-Guarantee Fund which are the subject of Council Regulation No 3247/81.

- the Regulation opening and providing for the administration of a Community quota for chemically pure fructose originating in third countries not bound to the Community by a preferential trade agreement (1991);
- the Regulation laying down general rules for the grant of premiums to sheepmeat and goatmeat producers. The purpose of this Regulation is to amend the definitions of sheepmeat producers and producer groups, and to make more specific the concept of a holding partially situated in a disadvantaged area.