



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

## AGRICULTURE & FISHERIES



**16.10.09**

### Agriculture and Rural Development

#### Milk: First meeting of High Level Group (HLG) – 14/10/2009

The High Level Experts' Group on Milk met for the first time in Brussels on Tuesday 13 October, holding constructive discussions on contractual relations and bargaining power in the dairy market. The HLG was established by the European Commission to look into the medium and long-term future of the dairy sector, particularly in view of the phase-out of milk quotas, which will be concluded in April 2015. Its work runs in parallel to the measures the Commission is introducing to stabilise the dairy market in the short term. The HLG is chaired by Jean-Luc Demarty, the Commission's Director-General for Agriculture and Rural Development and Member States are represented by senior officials. Further meetings are scheduled to take place once a month and the HLG will issue its final report by the end of June 2010.

The next meetings of the HLG will take place on 10 November and 8 December on this block of issues. Further meetings will be scheduled monthly. Hearings will take place with stakeholders as from the November meeting. January's meeting will also seek experiences from 3<sup>rd</sup> countries. It is planned to organise a conference in March 2010. An internet consultation will be launched in January 2010 and will close shortly before the conference.

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#### Milk: Five Member States face levies worth € 99 million for exceeding milk quota – 15/10/2009

Levies for Member States which exceeded their milk quotas come to just over € 99 million for the 2008/2009 marketing year, according to a provisional calculation by the European Commission, based on Member States' annual declarations. Last year the total levy amounted to € 340 million. Five Member States (Austria, Cyprus, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands) exceeded their deliveries quotas. Altogether these account for an overrun of 348 400 tonnes,



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resulting in a levy of € 97 million. Italy exceeded its deliveries quota by 1.5%, the Netherlands exceeded by 1.4% and Austria by 1.2%. For quotas for direct sales to consumers, Italy and the Netherlands reported overruns totalling 7 500 tonnes, resulting in a levy on direct sales of € 2.1 million. Total EU milk production in the 2008-09 quota year (April- March) was 4.2 percent below quota. [Click here](#) for further info

### Three agricultural product names registered - 15/10/2009

The European Commission has added three names of agricultural products and foodstuffs to the Register of Protected Designations of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indications (PGI):

Czech beer: "Březnický ležák" (PGI);

Spanish beans: "Faba de Lourenzá" (PGI);

French pasta: "Raviole du Dauphiné" (PGI).

The three names are added to the list of about 850 product names already protected under the legislation on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin and traditional speciality.

### School Milk Scheme: Extension of products eligible - 15/10/2009

To make the School Milk Scheme more attractive, the Commission has extended the range of dairy products eligible for aid. To achieve this, the minimum milk content for fermented products with fruit has been reduced from 80% to 75%, which makes it possible to add more of other products. The same provision was extended to non-fermented milk products. These changes will allow products like fruit yoghurts and milk drinks with fruit juice to fall under the scope of the scheme. The changes are part of the series of measures proposed in July to help stabilise the dairy market. In July 2008, the School Milk Scheme was already adapted, making it simpler, extending it to secondary schools and increasing the product coverage.

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**[COM \(2009\) 510](#)** - Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 247/2006 laying down specific measures for agriculture in the outermost regions of the Union

On 30 January 2006 the Council adopted Regulation (EC) No 247/2006 laying down specific measures for agriculture in the outermost regions of the Union. The development in Community legislation and the practical implementation of this Regulation occurred and in the meantime require the amendment of some of its provisions. Therefore, this is a proposal for a



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Council Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 247/2006 and all necessary documents for the initiation of the respective procedure. Regulation (EC) No 247/2006 is amending the following: Article 5 on Sugar; Article 6 on milk based preparations, Article 18 on Wine and finally Article 19(4). The Regulation does not affect the sources of financing or the intensity of Community support.

**COM (2009) 539** - Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets and on specific provisions for certain agricultural products (single CMO Regulation)

During the discussion at the Council meeting on 7 September 2009 concerning the Communication from the Commission to the Council on the dairy market situation 2009 (COM (2009) 385), Member States required the Commission to adapt market instruments or create new ones in order to be able to react effectively to the increasing price volatility in a swift and flexible manner.

It is proposed therefore to extend the scope of Article 186 of the single CMO Regulation to enable the Commission to take measures with regard also to the dairy sector in cases of market disturbances where internal market prices significantly rise or fall.

### **Fisheries**

#### **Commission proposal for Total Allowable Catches for 2010 – 16/10/2009**

Commission Communication (COM (2009) 224 final) sets out the background to the proposal. Many fish stocks are subject to an advice to reduce catches to zero or to the lowest possible level. Many stocks are outside safe biological limits. Despite conservation measures imposed under the CFP, the number of stocks in these vulnerable categories is not declining. That analysis confirms that reinforced conservation measures concerning exploited fish stocks are highly necessary.

The European Commission is proposing the new levels of total allowable catch (TAC) and fishing effort for fish stocks available to Community fishing vessels mainly in the Atlantic and the North Sea. This proposal is based on scientific advice about the quantities of fish that can be caught sustainably. The Commission has also discussed working methods with Member States and the fishing sectors, and as a result of their advice has in many cases limited reductions to no more than 15% since last year.



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The "fishing opportunities" proposals will only contain TACs, quotas and effort levels and measures very closely linked to the uptake of quotas and effort. Based on the proposal, Member States' Fisheries Ministers will decide on the levels of TACs for 2010 at their meeting of 14 and 15 December.

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**Agriculture and Fisheries Council Meeting – 19/20<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

The Council will hold a policy debate on measures intended to improve the situation on the dairy market. The Presidency will pursue the objective of an adoption shortly after the European Parliament delivers its opinion. The Council will also be briefed by the Commission on a quarterly report on the dairy market.

The Ministers will discuss "Policy Coherence for Development, and in particular those aspects relating to food security and FAO reform".

The Council will be invited to adopt decisions concerning genetically modified maize and poultry meat marketing standards and will continue dealing with agriculture.

The Council will endeavour to reach political agreement, in the presence of Joe Borg, Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, on a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the Common Fisheries Policy and on the fishing opportunities for certain Baltic Sea stocks. The Council will then hold an exchange of views on the Bilateral Fisheries Agreement with Norway.

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