

1304th Meeting of the Special Committee on Agriculture
Presidency Flash No 6: Meeting of 12 March 2007

Dear Colleagues,

The 6th meeting of the SCA under the German Presidency will take place on Monday 12th March and will start at 11.00 a.m.

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Proposal for a Council Regulation laying down rules for voluntary modulation of direct payments provided for in Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003 establishing common rules for direct support schemes under the common agricultural policy and establishing support schemes for farmers and amending Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005
10014/06 AGRI 198 AGRISTR 15
3. Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the definition, description, presentation and labelling of spirit drinks
14866/06 AGRIORG 88 AGRIFIN 96 CODEC 1233
DS 863/06 + ADD 1 + ADD 2, DS 185/07
4. (a) Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1784/2003 on the common organisation of the market in cereals
6375/07 AGRIORG 7 AGRIFIN 12

(b) Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1883/78 laying down general rules for the financing of interventions by the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, Guarantee Section
5433/07 AGRIFIN 2 FIN 19
6910/07 AGRIFIN 18 FIN 90
5. Proposal for a Council Regulation establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets and on specific provisions for certain agricultural products
16715/06 AGRI 406 AGRIORG 105
6887/07 AGRI 56 AGRIORG 12
DS 165/07
6. Proposal for a Council Regulation opening tariff quotas for imports into Bulgaria and Romania of raw cane sugar for supply to refineries in the marketing years 2006/2007, 2007/2008 and 2008/2009
16902/06 AGRIORG 106 AGRIFIN 128
DS 919/1/07 REV 1
7. Examination procedure questions:

Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the derogations from housing requirements for organic livestock in buildings from before 24 August 1999 and before 24 August 2000
7121/07 AGRILEG 36
8. AOB
- Organization of future work

Voluntary modulation

The Presidency will inform about the informal consultations of the Presidency with Members of the EP on 6 March. Further Information will follow as soon as possible.

Spirit Drinks

The SCA on 12 March will continue the discussion from the last SCA in order to reach agreement on the few remaining substantial points (definition of vodka, comitology, "bonificateurs", labelling for sweetening, hydrocyanic acid content in stone-fruit spirits). And on the last technical items. A Presidency compromise will be distributed by the end of the week (DS 195/07).

Maize intervention/Interest lump sum

The discussion held at the SCA meeting on 5 March noted the report from the Working Party (Doc. 6375/1/07 REV 1), and the clear opposition of a number of delegations to the proposal of the Commission (Doc. 16922/06 – COM(2006) 755 final). Consequently, the Presidency will draft a paper with elements for a compromise on the reform of the maize intervention this week. The paper will be circulated as soon as possible to give delegations enough time for examination.

The aim of the debate at the SCA meeting on 12 March is to agree on the compromise paper as a basis for discussion at the forthcoming Agriculture Council.

There is no debate planned on the proposal concerning amendments to the general rules governing the financing of interventions by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund.

Single Common Market Organisation

The proposal of the Commission (Doc. 16715/06 – COM(2006) 822 final) was examined by the Working Party on horizontal questions in January and February (see Doc.6887/07). Delegations agreed with the Commission's approach in general. A number of questions, remarks, comments and requirements concerning individual parts of the proposal were raised.

The Presidency has identified five questions (DS 165/07) on the main elements of the proposal, which will be presented at the forthcoming SCA meeting on 12 March with a view to the discussion at the Agriculture Council on 19 March.

The objective is to get more detailed information about the SCA's opinion on sensitive and political items such as including wine and fruit and vegetable in the new CMO, transferring competences from the Council to the Commission, the abolition of pigmeat intervention, objectives and functions of producer organisations in the sector of olive oil and hops, and the organisation of the single management committee.

The outcome of the SCA meeting should facilitate the future debate in the Council.

Import quotas on raw cane sugar into Bulgaria and Romania

The SCA will come back again to this item which was discussed last at the meeting on 22 January. At that time the Romanian delegation entered a scrutiny reserve on the drafting of Bulgaria's requested amendment (DS 27/07) concerning the monitoring and management of the import tariff quotas. Meanwhile, a revised version of the draft Regulation has been drawn up which takes Bulgaria's and Romania's concerns into account (DS 919/1/06 rev 1).

The intention is to approve the draft Regulation for adoption by the Council as an A-point once the European Parliament has given its opinion.

Best regards,
Dietrich Guth