



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Directorate B. Multilateral relations, quality policy
The Director

Brussels,
JO/sn/agri.ddg1.b.4(2015)1410549

Short report of the 124th meeting of the Regulatory Committee on Organic Production of 18-19 March 2015

President: Diego CANGA FANO

26 Member States were present. Portugal and Luxemburg were absent. Norway and Switzerland were present as observers.

Section A – Opinion of the Committee

1. N/A

Section B – Points for information and/or discussion

1. Implementation of EU organic regulations in third countries

A discussion took place on the table drafted by the Commission regarding the implementation of EU organic regulations in third countries.

2. Reporting and notifications under organic production legislation

Delegates were reminded to notify the list of control bodies/authorities and the annual summary report on use of non-organic seeds by 31 March at the latest, and to send ad-hoc notification only through OFIS. AT, LU and SK were also reminded to indicate the list of authorities endorsing the certificate of inspection for organic imports.

3. Follow up to irregularities and fraud allegations

a) Update on notification of EU irregularities

Delegates received an overview for the period 6/1/2015 – 24/02/2015 and were invited to provide clarifications for some of the cases.

COM also presented its preliminary conclusions in relation to declassified products notified by Romania in October 2014.

- b) Follow-up to irregularities related to import of sunflower cakes for feed from Ukraine Update on notification of irregularities concerning imported products
EU irregularities

COM provided an update on the developments, including Member State action and its assessment. Certain Member States provided supplementary information prior to the meeting as per COM request to facilitate a coordinated approach. First impressions regarding this information were also shared.

- (1) Overview of open notifications per 25/02/2015
- (2) Cases for presentation by the notifying Member State and discussion
 - (a) 226 (2/2015) DK – wheat from Kazakhstan
 - (b) 210 (122/2014) NL – quinoa from Peru
 - (c) 202 (112/2014) DE – oregano from Turkey
- (3) Treatment of cases notified on imports based on Member States import authorisations

4. EGTOP

COM gave an update information about EGTOP activities: Wine mandate was also presented and 10 days have been given to receive comments

5. Import regime (Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008)

- a) Overview on third countries
- b) US: visit of USNOP-USTR to DG AGRI, March 19-20. Representatives of USNOP and USTR will meet RCOP delegates to discuss issues related to the EU-US Organic Equivalence Arrangement.

A delegation from the USDA National Organic Program and USTR gave a presentation on the USDA organic regulations, recent changes to the regulations, the USDA organic control system (certification and accreditation), as well as the enforcement program and replied to MS questions.
- c) Draft regulation amending and correcting Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008 laying down detailed rules for implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 as regards the arrangements for imports of organic products from third countries.

The Commission presented a draft regulation amending and correcting Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008. The content of the draft was still under Commission internal consultation. Once agreed upon by the other Commission services concerned, the draft regulation is expected to be submitted to the vote of the Committee by written procedure.

6. Electronic certification of imported organic products: state of play

Delegates were informed of the latest development: workshops with national experts in February and launch of test period for the system, open to all competent authorities and to a few control bodies, importers and first consignees from 18 March until 17 May with a view to feed into discussions in the Committee meeting of 21 and 22 May.

7. Miscellaneous¹

- At the request of the Spanish delegation, the Commission clarified the requirements set out in Article 65(1) of Regulation No 889/2008 for the physical inspection of operators.
- The German delegation enquired about the Commission's intentions in terms of legislation for substances that have already been analysed by EGTOP, in particular potassium phosphonate. The Czech delegation presented a list of arguments on the benefits of using potassium phosphonate. The Commission indicated it is currently working on a draft proposal to update the annexes of R. 889/2008 for substances that have been considered compatible with organic principles. On potassium phosphonate, it recalled that the technical analysis of EGTOP has shown is not compatible with the principles of organic farming. The German delegation underlined that EGTOP's role was to provide technical advice and not to make legislation.
- Following requests from external organisations, the Commission asked the delegations whether they would have any objections if the Commission transmitted to these organisations the reports on slow-growing poultry strains and on non-organic seeds. No objections were raised.
- The COM clarified, at the request of the Swedish delegation, if the MS could apply national rules on pullets. Such rules could be applied if they supplement the existing EU rules and do not hamper free circulation. In the event of having EU rules on pullets, some transitional measures would be foreseen to help the sector to accommodate to the harmonised rules.
- At the request of the NL delegation, a discussion took place on the "Outline for EU organic dairy production without the use of antibiotics for export to the US under the US organic equivalence recognition of the EU".
- The COM shortly presented the objectives of the conference "Organic production, Research and Innovation: setting priorities for the future", to be held in the context of EXPO MILANO on 28-29 May 2015.



Diego CANGA FANO

Annex: List of participants

¹ Any subjects that the Member States wish to discuss under Point 'Miscellaneous' need to be submitted to the Commission and the other Member States at the latest one week before the meeting of the Regulatory Committee on Organic Production.

List of participants

Regulatory Committee on Organic Production of 18-19 March 2015

Country	Organisation	Number of Participants
BE	SERVICE PUBLIC DE WALLONIE - DG AGRICULTURE, ' RESSOURCES NATURELLES & ENVIRONNEMENT - DIRECTION DE LA QUALITE	2
	VLAAMSE OVERHEID, AFDELING DUURZAME LANDBOUWONTWIKKELING	
BG	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD	2
	PERMANENT REPRESENTATION	
CZ	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OF CZECH REPUBLIC	1
DK	MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES - THE DANISH VETERINARY AND FOOD ADMINISTRATION - DIVISION FOR FOOD QUALITY, TECHNOLOGY AND MARKETING PRACTICES	2
DE	BUNDESANSTALT FÜR LANDWIRTSCHAFT UND ERNÄHRUNG	3
	BUNDESMINISTERIUM FÜR ERNÄHRUNG LANDWIRTSCHAFT UND VERBRAUCHERSCHUTZ - BMELV	
	LANDESAMT FÜR NATUR, UMWELT UND VERBRAUCHERSCHUTZ	
EE	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE	1
IE	DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND THE MARINE	1
EL	PERMANENT REPRESENTATION	1
ES	MINISTERIO DE AGRICULTURA, ALIMENTACIÓN Y MEDIO AMBIENTE - SUBDIR. GEN. DE CALIDAD DIFERENCIADA Y AGRICULTURA ECOLÓGICA	1
FI	PERMANENT REPRESENTATION	2
	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY	
FR	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE	2
	MINISTRY OF ECONOMY	
HR	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE	1
IT	MINISTERO DELLE POLITICHE AGRICOLE ALIMENTARI E FORESTALI - UFFICIO PQA5 - AGRICOLTURA BIOLOGICA	2
CY	PERMANENT REPRESENTATION	1
LV	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE	1
LT	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE -RESOURCES AND QUALITY POLICY DEPARTMENT - AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL AND ORGANIC FARMING DIVISION	1
LU	-	-
HU	MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT - DEPARTMENT OF FOOD CHAIN CONTROL	1
MT	MINISTRY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, THE EBVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE	1

Country	Organisation	Number of Participants
NL	MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS	2
AT	BUNDESMINISTERIUM FUR GESUNDHEIT (BMG)	1
PL	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT - DEPARTMENT OF PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION	2
	MAIN INSPECTORATE OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD QUALITY	
PT	-	-
RO	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT	1
SI	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT	1
SK	CENTRAL CONTROL & TESTING INSTITUTE IN AGRICULTURE - DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ORGANIC PROTECTION	1
SE	NATIONAL FOOD AGENCY - FOOD STANDARDS DEPARTMENT	3
	SWEDISH BOARD OF AGRICULTURE	
	MINISTRY OF ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION	
UK	DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS (DEFRA) - ORGANIC TEAM	1
EFTA	-	-
IS	-	-
NO	NORWEGIAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY	2
	NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD - DEPARTMENT OF FOOD POLICY	
CH	FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS FDEA - FEDERAL OFFICE FOR AGRICULTURE FOAG - QUALITY AND SALES PROMOTION SECTION	1