

ABI(12)5580:1

Brussels, 31st August 2012

**MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF THE WORKING PARTY ON ORGANIC
FARMING ON 11TH JUNE 2012**

PRESENT: Nebel, Holdensen, Dienel, Deroo, Lepeule, Tozzi, Kicinski, Jaumotte, Rousseau, Bassewitz, Martin, Manoel, Pollastri, Valentini, Verset, Basto, Pior, Kalnina, Karbauskiene, Matousek, Moskal, Maninen, Voort
SECRETARIAT: Cynthia Benites

1.2. Adoption of the agenda and the minutes: both documents were adopted.

3. Information regarding the future work of the Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Production

The Secretariat explained how the expert group (commonly referred to as EGTOP) works, and provided an overview of its past and future activities.

4. Adoption of the Working Party's strategic agenda for 2012/2013

The Secretariat presented the strategic agenda ABI(12)2907. The document outlined the priorities for the Working Party – other issues might still be addressed on an ad hoc basis if possible. The Chairman conducted a vote and the strategic agenda was unanimously adopted.

5. CAP post 2013

The Secretariat presented Copa-Cogeca's position on the Commission's legislative proposals, Copa-Cogeca's proposed amendments and the European Parliament reports. The Secretariat also presented the three proposed amendments tabled by three members of the Working Party. These proposals had been sent to the members of the Working Party. The Secretariat pointed out that these proposals did not fall within the framework of Copa-Cogeca's position and that an initial discussion in the Working Party was necessary. The Chairman asked members to express their views on each proposed amendment. The results were as follows: the Working Party seemed unanimously to support the 1st proposal tabled by DAFC; there was no unanimous agreement on the 2nd proposal from Coop de France and it was proposed to alter the amendment; a majority of members seemed to be in favour of the 3rd proposal tabled by DBV although one delegation opposed the suggestion (Confagricoltura) and several delegations abstained (particularly APCA, BB).

6. Housing conditions for laying hens: adoption of the document outlining housing conditions for laying hens ABI(11)9103 (rev.2)

Mr Holdensen presented the changes to the document that had been presented at the last meeting. The Chairman conducted a vote for each proposal. All members agreed with the 1st proposal except the Coldiretti and Confagricoltura delegates, who expressed reserves. Only the Coldiretti, Confagricoltura and NFU delegates expressed reserves on the 2nd proposal. Only the Coldiretti, Confagricoltura and NFU delegates placed reserves on the 3rd proposal. Regarding the 4th proposal, Coldiretti stated that it was against multi-level systems and the DBV, LKÖ and DAFC delegates did not approve of the limit of 12 hens/m² and so placed reserves. The BB delegate requested that it be stated explicitly that the veranda could not have multiple levels and placed a reserve. The NFU and CIA delegates also placed reserves. The Coldiretti delegate placed a reserve on the 5th proposal. Finally, the Coldiretti and Confagricoltura delegates stated that they were placing general reserves on the document.

Regarding the written consultation that had been sent to the Working Party ABI(12)4200, the Chairman explained to members that the document used conclusions from the minutes of the Working Party meeting on 11th April 2011 and that, consequently, the members must be consulted in order for these points to be used in the Working Party's position paper. Due to a typographical error, the consultation would be sent out again and a week would be added to the consultation period. A document summarising the two consultations would then be sent to the POCC.

7. Broiler production

The Chairman was keen for the Working Party to have a position on broiler production and consulted the members about how best to proceed. The conclusion was that a written consultation would be most appropriate.

8. Information on the state of play regarding feedingstuffs and wine. The Secretariat presented the state of play on both issues.

9. Information and discussion on the use of organic seed

Mr Deroo introduced the item. He presented the current system with three levels of organic seed use and referred to Annex X of Regulation 889/2008, which is blank. He wanted steps to be taken to improve this situation. For the APCA delegate, it was important to continue to push all farmers to use organic seed and to give them the means to do so. Mr Holdensen described problems with the interpretation of European legislation, particularly regarding the conditions for registering seed in national databases. The Polish delegate explained that there had been difficulties in Poland and the same seemed to apply to the Czech Republic and Lithuania. The Chairman concluded by informing members that this item could be addressed in more detail at the next meeting of the Working Party if possible.

10. Latest information on the Commission's report to the Council and the Parliament

The Secretariat presented the Commission report and went over the main points in Copacogeca's response to the Commission's questionnaire on the report ABI(11)3262.

The Confagricoltura and Coop de France delegates highlighted the difficulties caused by the lack of customs codes for organic products. Mr Pior pointed out that this issue had already been addressed and that the Commission had highlighted how complex such a code would have to be. He added that the report lacked a precise timetable for solving the problems raised.

11. Discussion on organic production in glasshouses

The Chairman reminded delegates that the consultation which had been carried out would allow this item to be addressed in more detail at the next meeting. He added that members were invited to send the Secretariat any additional requests with regard to a future regulation. The Austrian delegate mentioned the need for a common position on this issue.

12. Commission working paper on the revision of Annexes I and II

The Chairman informed members that, following the consultation on biogas digestate ABI(12)3594, very few contributions had been received. However, those that had been received revealed polarised opinions and, as a result, it would not be possible for the Working Party to adopt a position on this issue.

13. Discussion on EU promotion policy

Mr Sfyroeras, deputy head of unit at Unit D4 at the Commission, presented this item ABI(12)4450. Responding to questions, Mr Sfyroeras stated that organic products were well-placed with regard to the budget allocated and the number of programmes approved and that promotion programmes could target consumers and non-organic farmers at the same time.

At the end of the meeting, the CAP and Confagricoltura delegates informed the Working Party about the negative effects droughts were having on feedingstuffs for herbivores. The NFU delegate was concerned about the move to 100% organic feed for monogastrics in 2014 and wondered if the Commission had a plan. The Secretariat informed members about Copa-Cogeca's position on the "Product from my farm" scheme.