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MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF THE COPA-COGECA WORKING PARTY ON EGGS AND POULTRY ON 15TH MARCH 2012

Present:

SHAEFFER, BAGNARA, HERMET, KARNER, SISINNI, BUNKENBORG, JANNING, MARTIN, FISCHER, BASEN, KICINSKI, GAGLIARDI, TISSOT, KOVAĻČUKS, MANNINEN, ZUBKÓW, ŁOŚ

Secretariat: ANDUGAR, BENITES, DERRIEN, PETIT, ZITTI.

1. and 2. The agenda and the minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 Poultrymeat, eggs and feed markets.

France: Egg production had fallen 9% in 2011, the situation was stable in the 2nd quarter of 2012. The price of chicken meat was low whilst the cost of feed continued to rise.

Spain: 85% of hens were now housed in enriched cages, no increase in alternative systems had been registered. Data showed that the number of hens had fallen by 8 million and it was estimated that 30% of poultry farms would close during the year.

UK: There was a shortage of eggs from caged hens and a surplus of free range eggs. There had been a sharp rise in the price of egg products, with egg production on a downward trend (-5%) in 2012.

Ireland: All farms were now compliant with the Welfare of Laying Hens Directive. Nevertheless, stable egg prices on the one hand and increasing feed and energy costs on the other were proving a challenge for producers.

Portugal: A drop in chicken meat production in 2011 had led to an increase in imports to meet domestic demand. Egg production had fallen by 12% and at present around 50-60% of conventional cages had been converted. The 15-20% increase in production costs had not been passed on to consumers.

Belgium: A shortage of eggs was pushing up prices. Around 85% of conventional cages had been converted.

Czech Republic: Egg production had fallen due to a drop in the number of laying hens (-1 million in 2012 compared to the previous year).

Hungary: Chicken meat production had risen (+12%). The situation was difficult for egg producers.

Slovakia: Chicken meat consumption and production were stable. Producers were compliant with the Welfare of Laying Hens Directive.

Finland: A 10% fall in egg production was expected by the summer. A 6% increase was forecast for chicken meat production in 2012.

The Netherlands: The implementation of the Broiler Welfare Directive should not have any impact on production or on costs linked to compliance with density standards. Regarding egg production, 30 farms were not yet compliant due to delays as a result of bureaucracy.

Latvia: Hens on the few farms not yet compliant would be slaughtered.

Poland: 20% of producers were still using conventional cages. Many farms would close as a result of the increase in production costs, particularly the price of feed (+5/10€/t).

Denmark: 2011 was a record year for chicken meat which was now once again being exported to the Malaysian market, which had been closed for a long time for religious reasons. There was expected to be an increase in imports of egg products from the United States.

Estonia: Egg prices had risen as a result of shortages. Meat production had increased.

Italy: Egg prices had almost tripled in 2012 whilst chicken meat prices had fallen compared to the previous year. The delegation asked for the problem of barriers to the export of pasteurised eggs to China and Japan to be put to the Commission.

Germany: The delegation suggested asking the Commission to publish estimates on the extent to which the EU was self-sufficient in meeting demand for eggs and egg products.

3.4 The Secretariat presented Copa-Cogeca's reaction to the Commission's proposals for the future CAP. It informed members that the Working Party on Cereals was working on an impact assessment of ecological focus area. This would mean that around 3.7 million fewer hectares would be available which would equate to a fall in cereals production of 20 million tonnes. An impact assessment of crop rotation was more difficult as no definition of "crop" had yet been provided.

3.5 The Secretariat presented the state of play regarding origin labelling, particularly the questionnaire that had been sent to the Working Party in order to draw up some guidelines for a joint position paper by the Working Party. As the Council had reached an agreement on compulsory origin labelling (origin or provenance) for poultrymeat, the Commission now had two years to draft the implementing rules. The Working Party agreed that it was necessary to have compulsory place of origin labelling for processed products and egg products.

3.6 The Secretariat presented the conclusions of the Commission's impact assessment regarding the effects of a possible trade agreement with the Mercosur countries.

3.7 and 4. The presentations given by the Secretariat are available on Agri Info. Regarding antimicrobial resistance, the Spanish delegation raised the issue of availability and asked for this to be included in Copa-Cogeca's proposal.

Regarding meat inspections, the Secretariat informed the Working Party that EFSA would be publishing a scientific opinion on poultrymeat in May 2013. A round table with stakeholders was planned for November 2012 and would focus on 3 issues: information within the food chain, ante mortem animal inspections and distinguishing between farms according to risk.

5. The Irish delegation presented the state of play on the use of organic acids to control Campylobacter. This matter was currently being looked at by the member states regarding use for beefmeat.

The Chairman proposed contacting the other Working Parties on meat in order to establish a common strategy and approach.

6. The Secretariat presented Copa-Cogeca's lobbying actions and its position on the amendments to the rules on organic feed.

7. On the issue of combustion, the UK delegation reported on the conclusions of the meeting with DG SANCO and asked the experts present to contact their national authorities so that they were fully aware of when the discussions in the standing committee would be taking place. So far, according to information received by the Commission, only Italy, Ireland and the UK had raised the problem with the Commission.