

DRAFT

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WORKING
PARTY ON QUALITY ASSURANCE IN AGRICULTURE
(AQA) OF 20TH NOVEMBER 2014**

PRESENT: De Carné, Jochum, Benvenuti, Marranchelli, Eramo, Pollastri, Tozzi, van Oorschot, Trenzado, Herben, Clarke, Wells, Wierzbicki, Montaigu, Jentzer, Strazdina, van Ginkel

SECRETARIAT: Benites, Brazsil, Valle

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

Items 1 and 2: Adoption of the agenda and the minutes of the last meeting

→ The working party, chaired by Mr Olivier DE CARNÉ, convened and adopted the agenda [AQA\(14\)8063 \(rev.1\)](#) and the minutes [AQA\(14\)8451 \(rev.1\)](#) from the last working party meeting

Item 3: Regulation No 1151/2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs: state of play [AQA\(14\)9154 \(rev.1\)](#)

→ The Secretariat provided an overview concerning the implementation of the regulation. On 19th June the legal texts laying down the rules for the application of the quality regulation were published. The Commission delegated regulation concerning the conditions to use the optional quality term “mountain product” was also published.

→ The chair opened the floor for questions/comments and several concerns were raised regarding the legal texts, in particular on the derogations with regard to the sourcing of feed in the case of a designation of origin.

Item 4: Update on the discussions and possibilities to review the potential for further simplification in the area of quality policy [AQA\(14\)9152 \(rev.1\)](#)

→ The chairman reminded members that one of the priorities of the new Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development was to review the potential to further simplify the quality policy. It was also underlined that this was a horizontal proposal, which did not only concern the foodstuffs sector, but also wine, spirits and aromatised wines.

→ The Secretariat presented the main threads of the discussion between the Commission and the Member States. The WP reminded that the discussion was not new. It was underlined the importance of the market demand as well as the marketing strategies to promote the added value of these products and make logos better understood. The WP was in favour of a certain amount of simplification, provided that it did not concern the contents of product specifications.

Item 5: State of play of the implementation of Regulation No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers:

→ - The chair gave the floor to the Secretariat that provided a general update on origin labelling. The Secretariat reminded that the discussion on the article 26.3 on voluntary country of origin labelling was still blocked. The WP discussed about the legal implications.

→ The Secretariat also explained the state of play of the other reports that the Commission was currently finishing (article 26.5) on milk and milk used as an ingredient in dairy (DG AGRI) and on unprocessed food, single ingredient products and ingredients that represent more than 50% of a food

(DG SANCO). Both reports have to be done at the end of 2014. They will launch the discussion with European Parliament and Council considering the possibility to establish new rules to inform consumers about the different categories. The chair gave the floor to the experts that stressed their preliminary remarks and concerns.

Item 6: Geographical indication protection for non-agricultural products at EU

level- state of play, preliminary results of the Public Consultation and next steps

→ The chair reminded that in July 2014 the Commission published the Green Paper “Making the most out of Europe’s traditional know-how: a possible extension of geographical indication protection of the European Union to non-agricultural products”. It was also explained that a letter [AQA\(14\)8240 \(rev.1\)](#) was sent to DG MARKT in the framework of the Consultation highlighting the importance of establishing clear legal coherence for all different types of products in case the protection is extended to non-agricultural products. The importance of preserving the system for agricultural products was also underlined. For instance, PDOs place a premium on the place of origin of the agricultural raw materials used, rather than only on the place of processing of the product.

Item 7: State of play of the discussions on the European Commission’s proposal on official controls (review of regulation (EC) N° 882/2004) and the link to quality certification schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

→ The chair gave the floor to the Secretariat to provide an update on the proposal. The Secretariat reminded that the Parliament had already adopted its opinion ([NPN\(13\)8954 \(rev.3\)](#)) at first reading on 15th April 2014. The Council was still discussing the proposal and the financing chapter together with the article 15 on meat inspection were the most sensitive of the discussion. It was explained that several Member States were opposing the fees chapter in favour of more subsidiarity.

Item 8: ICANN: protection of GIs on internet

→ The chair gave the floor to the Secretariat to provide an update on the dossier. It was explained that domains are sold under commercial law. For instance, “.wine” now exists. ICANN is the international body responsible for the domains. The WP Wine has been actively working on this issue to ensure that the name of GIs can only be used for protected products.

→ The chair underlined the importance of monitoring this topic to make sure that other sectors do not have the same problem in future (e.g. “.cheese”).

Item 9: AOB

→ The Chair reminded that in the afternoon the WP was going to meet together with the WP Promotion in a joint preparatory meeting for the Civil Dialogue Group “Quality and Promotion”. Next, the chair thanked the members for attending, the interpreters for their work and closed the meeting.

❖ Joint preparatory meeting for the civil dialogue group on “Quality and Promotion” COM(14)5819 (rev.1)

→ The WP Quality and the WP Promotion met together to discuss the new functioning of the CDG Quality and Promotion as well as the draft Strategic Agenda. The Secretariat provided an update on the new structure, its composition and the differences compared to the previous system of Advisory Groups. Some procedural questions, for instance the new procedure for elections were also addressed. The WPs were informed that Mr Jochum was nominated as Copa-Cogeca’s candidate for the position of chair of the new CDG. It was also explained that the candidates for the position of vice-chair were from FoodDrinkEurope and SACAR.

- Several delegates raised their concerns concerning the limited number of seats (8 in total) proposed for this CDG.
- Following this, an exchange of views on the draft strategic agenda was held.
- The chairs thanked the members for attending, the interpreters for their work and closed the joint preparatory meeting.