EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Directorate G. Markets and Observatories

Brussels,
Ares G2

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MINUTES

***Meeting of the* WORKING GROUP ON "PEACHES AND NECTARINES" OF THE CIVIL DIALOGUE GROUP ON "HORTICULTURE, OLIVES AND SPIRITS"**

Date: 20 May 2019

Chair: Mr Jesus GONZALEZ GARCIA (AGRI-G-2)

Organisations present: All Organisations were present.

1. Approval of the agenda (and of the minutes of previous meeting[1])

2. Nature of the meeting

The meeting was non-public.

3. List of points discussed

Europêch forecast for the 2019 campaign

Only the complete forecasts for apricots in the EU and for peaches and nectarines in France were available, both prepared by Europêch in April. On the other hand, certain Spanish experts provided preliminary estimations for peaches and nectarines in Spain.

The EU harvest of apricots is expected to reach 0.632 million tonnes in 2019, i.e. +12% and +19% compared with 2018 and with the average of the period 2013-17, respectively. With respect to 2018, substantial production increases are forecasted in the main producer Member States with the exception of Spain: 0.286 million tonnes in Italy (+34%), 0.157 million tonnes in France (+43%), 0.097 million tonnes in Spain (-36%), and 0.090 million tonnes in Greece (+1%).

The production of peaches and nectarines in France is likely to recover in 2019. The French harvest could reach normal volumes after the low crop in 2018: 0.111 million

[1] If not adopted by written procedure (CIRCABC)

tonnes of peaches (+15%), 0.098 million tonnes of nectarines (+20%), and 0.007 million tonnes of pavia (+20%).

Preliminary estimations in Spain amount to around 1 million tonnes for peaches and 0.5 million tonnes for nectarines. The initial assessment of damages caused by frosts in certain regions is being corrected. The harvest in 2019 could be between 6% and 20% higher than in 2018, and could reach similar volumes to 2017 (the year of the last market crisis).

Concerning peaches for processing (pavia), there is a steady shift from fruit intended for fresh consumption to pavia in Greece due to the impact of the Russian ban. With the new pavia plantations of 19 000 Ha, Greece could produce 0.500 million tonnes in the future.

Market situation for fresh and processed products

The early season in Spain started with low prices for a number of reasons. This is of much concern because prices in the beginning of the season usually mark the trend for the remaining of the season.

The weather conditions had a considerable bearing on the markets. Low temperatures in Central Europe in spring discouraged consumption. In addition, heavy rains in Spain in the beginning of May reduced the content of sugar in the fruit. This resulted in low quality of early varieties, which also deterred consumers from eating stone fruit.

High temperatures in Spain in mid-May accelerated the fruit ripening and gave rise to concentration of supplies, which put strong pressure on prices. On the other hand, the retailers delayed the marketing of stone fruit until mid-May.

As regards peaches for processing (pavia), hail storms in Greece caused some damages. The EU production of processed peaches is facing strong competition from neighbouring countries of Russia. Consumption of these products in the EU is decreasing, probably due to their high sugar content.

Spanish action plan for stone fruit

After the 2017' market crisis, the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture prepared an action plan to tackle the steady increase in production areas and volumes of stone fruit, the small size of producer organisations, and the impact of the Russian ban. The plan includes measures addressed to the sector to improve liquidity, balance, information, and the organisation and structure of the sector.

The opinions of the experts on the plan were divided. Some of them considered that it is an appropriate way forward to tackle the Spanish structural problem of the sector. Other experts were sceptical about the practical implementation of the plan.

4. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

5. Next steps

6. Next meeting

The next meeting will be channelled through the upcoming European Market Observatory on Fruit and Vegetables (date to be confirmed).

7. List of participants - Annex

(e-signed)

J. ONOFRE
Head of Unit

List of participants– Minutes

Meeting of the **WORKING GROUP ON "PEACHES AND NECTARINES" OF THE CIVIL DIALOGUE GROUP ON "HORTICULTURE, OLIVES AND SPIRITS"**

Date: 20 May 2019

	MEMBER ORGANISATION	NAME OF REPRESENTATIVES
1	COPA	D. BORDA LLOBET
2	COPA	J. CORBALAN
3	COPA	D. DEJONCKHEERE
4	COPA	S. VAZQUEZ HERRERA
5	Eucofel	A. RIDAO
6	Eucofel	A. SANCHEZ CASTRO
7	FoodDrinkEurope	O. APOSTOLOU
8	FoodDrinkEurope	C. GIANNAKAKIS
9	SACAR	P. BINARD
10	SACAR	F. BORRAS
	TOTAL	10