

EU Sheep Meat Forum

Presentation of the Recommendations

By

Chairman

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EU Sheep Meat Forum

- Established by Commissioner Hogan – 2015
- Welcomed by the sheep sector
- Explore assets, opportunities, challenges
- Focus on production, competitiveness, marketing, economic, social and environmental sustainability
- Producers, processors, traders and other stakeholders
- 4 meetings in Brussels. Excellent presentations, participation and debate

Thanks for your attention

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EU Sheep sector

- Value of €5.5bn in 2015
- 900,000 producers
- UK, Spain, France, ,Romania and Ireland
- Falling numbers. Now stabilised at 86.5m
- Self sufficiency of 87%
- Imports of 212,000t in 2015

Challenges

- Vulnerable or sensitive sector
- Low farm incomes
- Dependence on direct payments
- Large volumes of cheap imports
- Falling consumption
- Higher age profile of producers and consumers

Opportunities

- Premium quality meat
- 500m EU consumer market
- Only 87% self sufficient
- Potential of EU lamb for EU consumers
- Positive role in enhancing the environment
- Delivery of public goods

Recommendations

- Formulated from our meetings
- Consulted widely
- Many valuable submissions
- Recommendations – covering a wide range of issues – 13 areas. Many also cover goat sector.
- Two key themes and two Priority Recommendations

Priority Recommendations

Strong CAP Support for Sheep

The EU Sheep Meat Forum recommends strong future CAP support for the sheep sector, including coupled supports and prioritised and enhanced Rural Development measures. Recognising the key role sheep plays in enhancing the environment in extensive grassland systems, the Forum recommends the Commission consider a New Environmental payment target.

New Sheep Meat Communication and Promotion Programme

The EU Sheep Meat Forum recommends a New Sheep Meat Communication and Promotion Programme with a strong focus on the internal market aimed at positioning EU lamb as the automatic choice amongst EU consumers. Within EU promotion measures specific ring-fenced funding should be targeted to sheep.

Strong CAP supports and Greening⁹

- CAP Budget fully maintained, EU model of family farm and Community Preference
- Direct payments fully maintained – vital to sheep farm incomes
- Strengthen coupled support to sheep and sensitive areas
- Maintain eligibility of extensive sheep grazing areas
- EFAs

Prioritised and Enhanced RDP measures

- Target RDP measures more directly at active sheep farmers
- Prioritise and enhance RDP measures for sheep
- MS to Fully utilise all RDP measures incl. KT, animal welfare and Capital grant aid

New Environmental Payment

- As part of the CAP, to support measures for managing grassland through extensive livestock farming and to help reverse the accelerating problem of declining sheep numbers and land abandonment, the Commission consider the possibility of a New Environmental based payment.

Young Farmers

- Increased support for young farmers in sheep production.
- Continuation of the direct payments top up under the Young Farmers Scheme.
- Targeted measures for Young farmers under the Rural Development Programme.
- Higher payment rates for Young Farmers under the general RDP scheme measures.

New Sheep Meat Communication ¹³ and Promotion Programme

- New Sheep Meat Communication and Promotion Programme – EU lamb for EU consumers - Specific ring-fenced funding targeted at sheep.
- Directed at EU retail and food-service sectors, food and agri-media and younger consumers, highlighting convenience, quality, health and the strong environmental credentials of EU lamb.
- Utilisation of the EU label **Enjoy It's from Europe**

Improved Market Transparency¹⁴

- Dashboard on sheep meat similar to other meat sectors.
- Improved price reporting and a Market Price Observatory to provide transparency across the supply chain.
- Providing additional information on trade, price and margins.

Position in the Food Supply Chain

- Extend the provisions on contractual negotiations to the sheep sector.
- Improved regulation of food chain to remove unfair trading practices and create a fairer trading environment for suppliers, processors and primary producers.

Trade Issues

- No increase in preferential market access above existing TRQ's.
- Continued designation of sheep meat as a sensitive product
- Equivalence of standards - a key principle of EU trade policy. EU imports must meet equivalent standards across the key areas of animal health, consumer protection and the environment.

Trade Issues

- The UK in the EU sheep sector and Brexit. Existing and historic trade flows should be fully re-examined and a trade policy solution found that best accommodates the needs of the sector.
- On exports, lifting existing SPS barriers.
- Information campaigns on international markets.
- Access for EU live sheep exports to existing and new markets

Simplification and Cross Compliance

- Cross compliance requirements, including sheep identification and registration should provide a right to rectify in a close out approach.
- Flexibilities for certain unintentional non compliances, including on identification and traceability.
- The Commission to consider a more proportionate and fairer approach regarding penalties and tolerances.

Sheep Identification

- Supplementing rules on the identification and registration of sheep including simplifying requirements on movement documents, time periods for recording movements, the application of identifiers and other areas.
- The use of a batch traceability system, where appropriate.
- The continued availability and use of the derogation in respect of EID on lambs sent direct to slaughter.

Innovation

- Further incentives for research and development.
- At farm level, focus on improving productivity, quality, breeding, preventative disease control, education, advice and the use of technology.
- Improved co-ordination of breeding programmes between member states.
- Supporting investments to modernise slaughter processing and packing plants using the latest technology to maintain the competitiveness of the EU sector.
- Support investment and R & D in product development and added value.

Sanitary Issues

- Specified Risk Materials – reduction in ovine SRM and TSE testing based on the scientific opinions published by the EFSA.
- Animal health – support increased concerted and uniform animal health management between member states on implementing preventative strategies on animal disease.

Natural predators

- M S to exhaust the possibilities to support preventive measures under Rural Development and to compensate losses under state aid schemes.
- To explore the possibilities within the framework of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC to regulate populations of large carnivores in specific areas where they are threatening sheep farming.

Proposed follow up

- Recommendations to be taken on board by the relevant parties and implemented at national and EU level.
- Recommendations presented to Commissioner Hogan in Oct 2016.
- Recommend Commission informs the Council on the outcome of the EU Sheep Meat Forum.
- Proposal to monitor implementation by the EU Civil Dialogue Group on sheep.

Expression of Thanks

- EU Agricultural Commissioner Mr. Phil Hogan.
- All of the participants for their active and constructive involvement, and attendance at the 4 meetings in Brussels.
- All of the individuals and groups who made submissions to the Forum, both in meetings and in writing.
- The Commission services for their excellent support, organisation and facilities provided to the Group.



Thank You