

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CDG ON ANIMAL PRODUCTS – SHEEP MEAT AND BEEKEEPING ON 24TH NOVEMBER

POINTS FOR SHEEP MEAT AND GOAT SECTOR

- 1. Approval of the agenda and of the minutes of the last meeting of 11th of May 2016**
- 2. Sheep meat and goat meat market situation and forecasts:**
 - Market report by the European Commission and exchange of views
 - Presentation by the European Commission on the short-term outlook
- 3. Agricultural market crisis: European Commission July package of support to address the difficult situation in the markets, with a particular focus on the exceptional adjustment aid (with reference to the sheep sector)**
- 4. Outcome and recommendations of the EU Sheep Forum**
 - Overall presentation and exchange of views
 - Exchange of views on the future of the EU promotion policy for the EU sheep meat (to be confirmed)
- 5. State of play on simplification and reduction of administrative burden for sheep carcass classification and price reporting (including on the implementing and delegated acts)**
- 6. Bluetongue situation in the EU**
- 7. State of play with regard to SPS barriers applicable to EU sheep meat exports to the USA - market access update - trade opportunities and challenges for the sheep meat sector**
- 8. AOB**

1. Approval of the agenda and of the minutes of the last meeting of 11th of May 2016

The agenda was adopted and the minutes were approved.

The chairman underlined that the deadline for the minutes needs to be respected.

2. Sheep meat and goat meat market situation and forecasts:

- Market report by the European Commission and exchange of views
- Presentation by the European Commission on the short-term outlook

The European Commission representative gave a presentation which can be found on [CIRCABC/public website](#):

- Sheep slaughterings have been down by -2%, while goat slaughterings have decreased by -1.8%, with a variation between the MS;
- EU heavy lamb prices are below last year's level because of Northern Ireland and Great Britain (exchange rate), with a variation between the MS;
- EU light lamb prices have recovered;
- New Zealand has the lowest price at world level;
- British lamb has been more competitive due to the exchange rate;
- EU imports: 4.2% increase; the value of imports have decreased; New Zealand uses today 70% of its quota but its exports, especially in April, are composed of high value cuts; New Zealand has exported less to France but more to the Netherlands;
- EU exports: EU has increased its export level; more exports have been to Libya, Jordan but also Israel, Switzerland; live sheep exports increased;
- Forecast: prudence with Romanian figures. The figure of +5.3% increase in heads in 2016 may not be realistic; in t, experts foresee a +1.6% increase;
- In 2017, a reduction in production of New Zealand (-3%) and Australia (-2 to 3%) may impact their exports.

The Chairman requested that attention is paid to import and exports volumes and values.

Copa asked for clarification on the correlation between the production figure up to now (which is negative) and the forecast (which is positive). The impact of Brexit needs to be looked at as this may be significant in the sheep sector. Producers should not be the ones who lose. The figures show the impact of imports on the EU market, prices and producers, especially at Christmas and Easter time. In the context of the cumulative impact study on potential trade negotiations, there is a need for a greater analysis for sheep (especially when it comes to high value cuts - sheep legs). The EC needs to use the data from this study. Asked about the calendar for trade negotiations with Oceania.

IFAH asked if there are any indications about the impact of Brexit on the overall market for sheep.

The EC representative is aware of the potential statistical problems especially for Romania, which creates difficulty in estimating the future production. Unofficial slaughterings are not included in the market analysis. When it comes to Brexit, the EC acknowledges the potential impact for intratrade and extratrade but the EC does not take any stand until there are further indications from the UK government. When it comes to future trade negotiations with Oceania, EC services treat the sheep sector as a sensitive one. Since the agreement was signed (in 80s), the trade pattern has changed.

The Chairman reminded that the timing of imports and cuts is critical.

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3. Agricultural market crisis: European Commission July package of support to address the difficult situation in the markets, with a particular focus on the exceptional adjustment aid (with reference to the sheep sector)

The EC representative reminded the measures taken by the EC since the beginning of difficulties in the market, in 2014, in the dairy but also in other livestock sectors. Out of the 2015 solidarity package, only France supported sheep, among other livestock sectors. For the exceptional adjustment aid of July 2016, among the Member States having notified their measures only Bulgaria has reported its intention to support sheep and goat (small scale farming, extensive production methods) (by the time the minutes are redacted, it can be confirmed that also Belgium, Ireland and Italy have planned measures available for the sheep sector).

4. Outcome and recommendations of the EU Sheep Forum

- Overall presentation and exchange of views

Mr John Bryan, the Chairman of the EU Sheep Forum gave a presentation on the this Forum's recommendations, which can be found on [CIRCABC/public website](#):

- The recommendations were centred around two priority areas: strong CAP support and promotion;
- Other recommendations refer to young farmers, coupled support, food supply chain, trade, simplification and cross compliance, sheep identification, innovation, sanitary issues, natural predators;
- The chairman of the Forum already met DG AGRI and DG Trade to present the recommendations to them. This document is to be used in the next debates around CAP and promotion.

Discussion

Copa underlined the importance of coupled support and that CAP should not bear the costs with large carnivores conservation objectives. Protection measures against large carnivores are not always efficient and compensation is burdensome for national budgets. Requested that the Habitats Directive evolves when it comes to the annexes (start talking about management) otherwise sheep production will disappear, with serious consequences on the environment.

BirdLife rejected the idea that the ENVI budget should finance the large carnivores depredation.

UECBV thanked the chairman for his commitment, for engaging with all stakeholders and a fair, balanced report. The issues are well identified and everybody needs to ensure that the recommendations will be put into force and will make sure that the momentum will not be lost.

The chairman of the forum agreed with the need for an impact assessment on large carnivores and that costs should not be born by the agricultural policy. Coupled support should be targeted to vulnerable sectors.

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- Exchange of views on the future of the EU promotion policy for the EU sheep meat (to be confirmed)

The European Commission representative gave a presentation which can be found on [CIRCABC/public website](#):

- The annual work programme for 2017 has been adopted;
- 4.5 million € are available if there are problems in the market;
- 5 programmes may include sheep, but are not exclusive.

Discussion

UECBV and Copa asked why the sheep sector does not have a specific envelope and how can the EC assist the sheep sector to get specific funding? Their representatives underlined that the key issue that the sheep meat forum highlighted was the consumption and how to reverse the trend. There is a strong and urgent need for a specific budget for sheep meat for a period of time.

IFAH informed about the infographic on healthy animals for sustainable production which is available on their website.

The EC representative reminded that the specific envelope for dairy and pig meat was due to the Russian ban. The EC is open to suggestions but this remains a political decision. The recommendations resulted from the forum are a good argument for the work programme of 2018 and the EC has taken note of it.

5. State of play on simplification and reduction of administrative burden for sheep carcass classification and price reporting (including on the implementing and delegated acts)

The European Commission representative gave a presentation which can be found on [CIRCABC/public website](#).

There is no change in the state of play for the sheep sector. The EC representative reminded the process and underlined that the publication of the delegated and implementing acts can be expected for April/May.

Discussion

Copa asked if it is voluntary to report prices, if the classifications is also applying to goats and if the EC knows the countries which want to classify/where it is mandatory.

The EC representative underlined that price reporting is mandatory but carcass classification is not. There are no details on who would like to classify carcasses but it is expected that those who use it today, will continue to use it in the future. However, the majority of countries do not use carcass classification today.

6. Bluetongue situation in the EU

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The European Commission representative presented the disease maps which can be found on [CIRCABC/public website](#).

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Discussion

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Copa asked about the changes in the restriction zones. The French delegate reminded that the French authorities have born the cost with the vaccination policy.

EFNCP asked if there are statistics with the number of animals affected by the disease.

FESASS asked about the difference in treatments of the serotypes and if EFSA's opinion could be available and presented before the OIE general assembly.

The EC underlined that the restriction zone has gradually moved North. EFSA opinion will be released by beginning of the year when the EC will analyse if there is a need for a change in policy.

7. State of play with regard to SPS barriers applicable to EU sheep meat exports to the USA - market access update - trade opportunities and challenges for the sheep meat sector

The EC representative reminded the state of play:

- exporting sheep and goat from EU to US is blocked by US animal health and food safety policy. US has not adopted international OIE standards for TSE.
- A draft rule to bring the US in line with the OIE was issued for consultation on 19 July 2016. The consultation was open for 60 days, but there then follows an undefined period for the authorities to take these comments into account.
- Hopefully there will be news in early 2017, but this is more uncertain with the incoming administration.

Discussion

UECBV reminded that there is a substantial opportunity to export lamb to US as sheep consumption is rising. The main supplier is Australia. There will be a big win if the EU Members States will be approved for sheep meat in 2017.

Copa asked about the compatibility between the two systems.

The EC representative reminded that even with the animal health issues tackled, the food safety aspects remain to be dealt with.

As there were no AOBs introduced, the chairman concluded the first part of the meeting.

POINTS ON BEEKEEPING

1. **Situation and management of the honey market**
2. **Presentation by the sector of the different definitions and status of bee products**
3. **Statutes of new products: male larvae and larvae of queens - what are the possible aid for the introduction of a European record**
4. **Results of the coordinated control plan of the Commission to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices in the marketing of honey (possible)**
5. **Presentation of the overview of beekeeping programs adopted**
6. **Presentation on the timing for the implementation of the methodology for the evaluation of pesticides on bees and on uniform principles (possible)**
7. **AOB**

The agenda was approved with two AOB points introduced by Copa: wax adulteration and Aethina Tumida and Vespa Velutina. The EC representative recommended that the last point is treated within the next CDG as different DGs are responsible for this topic.

The minutes were adopted.

1. Situation and management of the honey market

The European Commission representative gave a presentation which can be found on [CIRCABC/public website](#):

- EU is the second world producer of honey;
- Thanked Copa and Cogeca for sending the FAO link on the average for 2010-2014;
- China does not appear as an important producer of bee wax which is peculiar;
- Prices have followed an increasing trend in Spain;
- EU honey imports increased a lot from Ukraine (special access without duties).

Discussion

Copa underlined that prices are at a weak level today. Ukrainian prices have severely decreased and honey is imported at dumping prices which is making the professional beekeepers disappear. The Spanish delegate underlined a problem with the statistics for Spain.

FDE welcomed the information presented (prices and import prices have increased since 2006). The simplification of data collection is welcome. Some figures are unrealistic and hopefully they can be corrected.

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The EC representative reminded that the prices are taken from official sources, however in the next campaign prices are going down in Spain.

2. Presentation by the sector of the different definitions and status of bee products

Copa delivered a presentation which can be found on [CIRCABC/public website](#):

- Regretted the lack of a definition for apiculture products in the CMO;
- Presented proposals for such potential definitions.
- At national level, the status of each product is different per country and often, there are no definitions (except for Italy).

Discussion

Copa asked what would be the next opportunity to include such definitions in the CMO. Acknowledged that the problem was of a political nature.

The EC representative reminded that during the last CAP discussion, it was not possible to have such a harmonisation. It is equally important that the criteria in the legislation is met. It is difficult to work with different status of products.

3. Statutes of new products in the context of the novel food regulation: male larvae and larvae of queens - what are the possible aids for the introduction of a European application

The European Commission representative gave a presentation which can be found on [CIRCABC/public website](#) and which focused on general food law, main changes of the novel food regulation, the transition to the new system.

- The EC has mandated EFSA for a scientific opinion on risk profile related to the production and consumption of insects as food and feed. The opinion noted that there are knowledge gaps and uncertainty related to possible hazards when insects are used as food and feed. There. 12 insects which are reported to have the biggest potential to be used as food in the EU;
- Insect farming could reduce food waste;
- The EC representative explained the procedure for submitting the applications. A safety evaluation is conducted by EFSA which has 9 months to deliver their opinion. The EC has 7 months to draft implementing regulation. When it comes to traditional food from a third country, EFSA and the Member States will have 4 months to submit duly reasoned safety objections. The applicant can apply for confidentiality and data protection . The latter cannot be applied to traditional foods.
- The new regulation will be applicable as of January 2018.

Discussion

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Copa asked about 2 products: male larvae and larvae of queens, in particular about the procedure for determination of the novel food status and the application for an authorisation.

The EC representative reminded that a novel food is any food that was not used for human consumption to a significant degree within the European Union before 15 May 1997. If the food is novel an authorisation is thus required.

4. Results of the coordinated control plan of the Commission to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices in the marketing of honey (possible)

The European Commission representative gave a presentation which can be found on [CIRCABC/public website](#)

- The report has not been finalised, it will be available in few weeks' time;
- The EC representative reminded the legal basis: a 2014 EP Resolution listed honey as the product most vulnerable to fraud. The EC has launched a coordinated plan at EU level in 2015 which showed that 6% of honey is adulterated with sugar, while 11% is suspected to be;
- JRC was asked to test samples collected by MS and make recommendations to validate the methods used. The advanced EA/LC-IRMS method used by JRC is able to capable of detecting adulterations of honey with sugar syrups that mimic sugar profiles of authentic honey. However is not validated at international level, it relies on empirically determined benchmark purity criteria;
- JRC came up with several draft recommendations: an EU bio bank of honeys, sugar syrups, bee feeding products, European honey reference database, validation by an international collaborative study and endorsement via a standard development organisation.
- The EC representative reminded that the advanced EA/LC-IRMS, although not validated, can be used for b2b testing, check compliance of honey with criteria of Directive 2001/110/EC and as screening test for official controls.

Discussion

FDE asked why magnetic resonance was rejected as method for this and what is expected from the internalisation of the methods. Hopes for a harmonised approach for checking the authentication of honey.

Copa underlined the disappointment for not having the results yet. The traceability to allow the detection of fraud is problematic because of a wide variety of mixtures. The laboratories who are specialized in honey analyses are of the opinion that the two analyses used by the JRC can't detect all the adulterated honeys. It is impossible to detect some fraud in case of Asian honey (feeding of bee colonies and extraction of humid honey or honey filtered on resin).

The EC representative reminded that JRC decided what methods to use and they chose the one which is the most suitable one for checking adulteration with sugars. When the report is out, the JRC recommendations will be discussed. The implications for EU honeys need to be carefully analysed.

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The new Official Control Regulation which will be adopted in spring 2017 allows to establish an EU centre for food authenticity.

The Chairman underlined the importance of this point and that the work and the discussions should continue in future.

5. Presentation of the overview of beekeeping programs adopted

The European Commission representative gave a presentation which can be found on [CIRCABC/public website](#):

- There are no new info on hives. The number of beekeepers has increased. 3/4 of beekeepers are organised in beekeepers associations. 4% of beekeepers have more than 150 hives.
- The cost of producing honey is around 3.04 euros while the prices for multi-floral honey are around 5.5 euro/kg;
- Main changes for 2017-2019: an additional 36 million €, new measures eligible and some additional measures adapted to the needs sector, a reliable method to determine the number of bee hives. *Vespa Velutina* and *Aethina tumida* are covered;
- 18 MS have a national register of beehives which covers the 6 largest MS involved in the production of honey. 10 MS wish to go this road.

Discussion

Copa asked that this presentation is made available on the relevant website. How is the non-affiliated number estimated and what are the reasons for non-affiliation? 10 countries do not have statistics, 10-15% beekeepers are thus lost without trace.

EFFAT asked about the impact of Varroa in the EU.

ECVC asked if it is possible to combat varroasis by not using pesticides.

The EC representative reminded that the notification of the programmes is a continuous process which makes difficult updating the website. Translations will be made available on the website as soon as possible. Being a member of an association is voluntary. The fact that in some countries the number decreased might be due to tax registration, age. It is difficult to know the negative impact on bee health if colonies are weakened by lack of nutrition, varroa.

6. Presentation on the timing for the implementation of the methodology for the evaluation of pesticides on bees and on uniform principles (possible)

The EC representative read the written contribution from DG Sante on the methodology for evaluation of pesticides on bees and on uniform principles.

7. AOB - Adulteration of waxes

Copa gave a presentation which can be found on [CIRCABC/public website](#):

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- A questionnaire has been sent out to beekeepers. There are some concerning conclusions: there are important residues.
- In 2015, 77.4% samples were adulterated with paraffin. In 2016, 70%. Stearic acid (20-35%) was found in 6 samples;
- Bees can work with paraffin but not with stearic acid;
- There are significant imports of bee wax, it is important to have a product definition, set the eligibility conditions, controls, food risks. It is well known that a lot of wax is coming from China but there are no statistics.

Discussion

Copa underlined the need to carry out controls on wax. Paraffin has nothing to do with beekeeping but beekeepers are always the first to be blamed. Raised the issue of Chinese honey consumption increase while there is no Chinese honey on the market (as results from the statistics). Knowing the origin is important.

FDE underlined that the high honey price and wax price increases the temptation to falsify the product.

ECVC asked if it is known what pesticides are in the Chinese wax. We need to encourage consumers to consume EU honey.

The EC representative underlined the importance of sharing information among member states. Given that this is not a food safety issue, it is not checked at border. DG Taxud may be informed. Wax is not a product of human consumption, rules are different. Some countries encourage the consumption of EU honey.

The chairman thanked the members for their participation, the EC for their assistance and the interpreters for their work.

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