

QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM

Title of the study:

IMPLICATIONS OF ASYNCHRONOUS GMO APPROVALS FOR EU IMPORTS OF ANIMAL FEED PRODUCTS

DG/Unit: DG AGRI, Unit H1

- Official managing the study: Manuel GÓMEZ-BARBERO

Contractor: Agricultural Economics Research Institute (LEI), The Netherlands

Assessment carried out by:

Steering group with active participation Units B.1, H.1, L.1, L.4, L.5 of AGRI, SG, SANCO, TRADE, JRC and RTD

Date of the Quality Assessment: January 2010

(1) RELEVANCE

Does the study respond to information needs, in particular as expressed in the terms of references?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The study responds well to the information needs defined in the Tender Specification (*TENDER N° AGRI / 2008-EVAL-09*). It analyses the impact of asynchronous GMO authorisation within different scenarios on the availability of feedstuff of non-EU origin and provides with an elaborated economic assessment of the effects on the EU livestock sector. The study covers in a good way the scope requested in terms of examination period, products, sectors and geographical dimension.

(2) APPROPRIATE DESIGN

Is the study design adequate for obtaining the results needed for responding to the information needs?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The methodology design is well reasoned and fits well to most of the specific tasks of the study. The starting point of the research exercise was, in line with the Tender Specification, an elaboration of a general analytical framework. This theoretical work formed a good basis for the methodological design of the study, including the identification of an extensive empirical work need. The methodology developed for the empirical analyses combined different elements, including qualitative analysis fed by the data collected within surveys, expert judgements, secondary data and quantitative analyses.

(3) RELIABLE DATA

Are data collected adequate for their intended use and have their reliability been ascertained?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The study collects relevant and reliable data which paves the way to elaborate a more profound empirical underpinning than previous research exercises in the subject. Sources of secondary data were the United Nations COM Trade database, FAOSTAT-TRADESTAT, Trade Atlas of Global Trade Information Services, USDA PS&D, WTO tariff databases as well as the FAPRI, WATSIM, CAPRI, FeedMod modelling systems (including their ad-hoc built databases. Other sources of these data were a literature review of the existing similar research and other published or unpublished studies with different objectives as well from companies and other websites. The data sources are identifiable in the report.

Primary data, when needed, was obtained from interviews to experts.

(4) SOUND ANALYSIS

Are data systematically analysed to answer questions and cover other information needs in a valid manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
		X			

Arguments for scoring:

Most of the needed analyses were carried out in a satisfactory way and were adequately developed. The study, however, presents some unbalances concerning the appropriateness of some analytical quantitative and qualitative tools. The lack of full appropriateness is only partly and very superficially reported in the limitations shown in the final report. A key limitation is the fact that the transition between the beginning of a structural feed supply shortage and the new equilibrium in EU livestock composition has been briefly and superficially explored. Another key limitation is the weaknesses of the approach chosen for the short- term analysis.

(5) CREDIBLE FINDINGS

Do findings follow logically from and are justified by, the data/information analysis and interpretations based on pre-established criteria and rational?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory X	Good	Very Good	Excellent
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Arguments for scoring:

The data sources and analyses carried out form a satisfactory basis for supporting the findings. Yet more relevant findings would have been obtained if further explanations of what was found were provided. The study also presents unbalances as regards this respect.

(6) VALID CONCLUSIONS

Are conclusions non-biased and fully based on findings?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory X	Good	Very Good	Excellent
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Arguments for scoring:

The conclusions are unbiased, balanced and prudent. However, the reasoning supporting the link between the findings and the conclusions is not always well explained.

(7) HELPFUL RECOMENDATIONS

Are areas needing improvements identified in coherence with the conclusions? Are the suggested options realistic and impartial?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory X	Good	Very Good	Excellent
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Arguments for scoring:

The recommendations are satisfactorily unbiased and realistic. However, much more elaboration on them would have been desirable. The recommendations do not provide clear policy proposals for the future as regards a key question posed by the technical specifications.

(8) CLARITY

Is the report well structured, balanced and written in an understandable manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
		X			

Arguments for scoring:

The report is satisfactorily structured although it would have been desirable a structure better conveying the information. There are unnecessary repetitions of information that would need to be avoided. The written style is very heterogeneous throughout the report and. The report is unbalanced in terms of quality of the writing being poor in several chapters or/and sections. The executive summary does not reflect in a clear, consistent and comprehensive manner the main findings of the report.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE FINAL STUDY REPORT

Overall, the quality of the report is assessed to be **satisfactory**

Is the overall quality of the report adequate, in particular:

- **Does the study fulfil contractual conditions?**

The study fulfils the contractual conditions.

- **Are the findings and conclusions of the report reliable, and are there any specific limitations to their validity and completeness?**

The findings are reliable. However, deepen explanations of what is found would have been desirable and would have helped to better draw the conclusions from them.

- **Is the information in the report potentially useful for designing intervention, setting priorities, allocating resources or improving interventions?**

The study report was finalised before the discussion about a "technical solution" for the problem of low level presence of EU unauthorized GMOs found in feedstuff imports. The data collected and shown in the study report as well as its findings are highly relevant and can be used in ongoing and future reflections on the EU policy on GMOs.

