



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Directorate G. Markets and Observatories
The Director (acting)

Brussels, 17 December 2021
AGRI.DDG3.G/MS

MINUTES

Meeting of the Civil Dialogue Group “HOS – Olives sector”

19 November 2021 – By videoconference

Chair: Head of Sector, AGRI-G.4

Organisations present: All Organisations were present, except EFNCP, EPHA, PAN Europe, SACAR and TomatoEurope

1. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved.

2. Nature of the meeting

The meeting was non-public.

3. List of points discussed

Reminder of the new Rules of Procedure

The Commission reminded that the member organisations of the civil dialogue groups (CDGs) have been appointed for a seven-year mandate, which expired in July 2021. In June 2021, the Commission decided to temporary extend the current CDGs organisation until the end of 2022 given that new CAP will be applicable only as from 2023.

In addition to a mere extension of the mandate, the Commission decided to take over the role of the chair of the CDGs meetings. Moreover, certain arrangements with regard to the agenda and the minutes of the meetings would aligned with the practice followed in other expert groups with a view to ensuring consistency.

The Rules of Procedure of the CDG Horticulture, Olives & Spirits were adopted on the meeting of 1 October 2021.

Restitution from the morning session of the Working Group on olives, market situation and technical issues

The Commission updated the stakeholders on the meeting of the Working Group on olives, market situation and technical issues.

In the olive oil sector, the world production is forecast at 3.1 million tonnes, in line with the five-year average world production and slightly decreasing by 3% compared to the previous marketing year 2020/21. This results from a production increase by 15% outside the EU (at 1.1 million tonnes), offsetting a production decrease by 3% in the EU (at almost 2 million tonnes). Production in Spain and Greece are estimated to decrease by 6% and 15% year-on-year (y/y) respectively, whilst production in Italy and Portugal should increase by 15% and 20% (y/y) respectively. EU supply is forecast at 2.7 million tonnes (imports estimated at 210 000 tonnes), whilst total uses are estimated at 2.3 million tonnes (860 000 tonnes exports combined with 1.5 million tonnes consumption), bringing ending stocks at around 420 000 tonnes.

On trade, EU imports from third countries reached 167 000 tonnes during marketing year 2020/21, decreasing by 34% compared to the previous marketing year. On exports, the EU exported 800 000 tonnes during marketing year 2020/21, slightly below the record level of exports recorded in 2019/20. Slightly higher exports to the US partly compensated for lower exports to all the other main trade partners.

On prices, Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) prices in Spain and Greece rebounded strongly in April 2021, following the suspension of the US tariffs on ES bottled olive oil, bringing prices above their five-year average prices and stabilising them between 3.2 and 3.3 EUR per kg. In Italy, EVOO prices moved above average for almost 50 consecutive weeks between November 2020 and August 2021. Prices of EVOO in Italy hit 4.44 EUR per kg in the first week of November.

Promotion policy review

The Commission presented the state of play of [the review of the EU agri-food promotion policy \(Regulation EU 1144/2014\)](#).

The policy is being reviewed as announced in the Farm to Fork strategy in order to enhance its contribution to more sustainable food systems. A public consultation has been carried out by the Commission and a conference of experts was also organised in July 2021 to discuss the future policy. The Commission is currently preparing an impact assessment. Legislative proposals may be presented in the second quarter of 2022.

Revision of marketing standards for olive oil

The Commission informed that two separate revisions of olive oil marketing standards are ongoing. The first one aims to bring in line marketing standards with the empowerments in Regulation 1308/2013, to harmonise the terminology between the three regulations, to simplify the provisions and to clarify those provisions based on past experience. The second revision concerns marketing standards for all agricultural products and is looking at how they could fulfil the new objectives under the new Farm to Fork strategy, especially regarding sustainability. Simplification and modernisation objectives are also pursued. For the first revision, the Commission is currently consulting Member States, via the Committee for the Organisation of Agricultural Markets and the Expert Group for Agricultural Markets on the two draft legislative acts: one Implementing Regulation and one Delegated Regulation. For the second revision, an open public consultation (OPC) took place until end of August 2021, where the Commission received around 300 replies. The Commission is currently assessing the

replies and presented the main ideas resulting from the OPC. In the coming weeks, the Commission will work on an impact assessment.

LIFE Olivares Vivos Project

The project LIFE Olivares Vivos aims at recovering biodiversity on olives groves and increasing profitability for farmers. The expert explained the impact of the project, which has a significant increase in richness and abundance of biodiversity in demonstrative farms, thanks to the implementation of an Agro-Environmental Scheme (AES). It has also achieved a decrease in the costs for fertilisers and phytosanitary products, as input requirements are 22% lower on average. The project has implemented a certification system for biodiversity included on the label for olive oils produced by farmers associated to the project, which will be available soon for new farms willing to adapt the AES proposed, increasing the added value of the product. The expert also informed of the continuation of the project, starting this year until 2026, extending the initiative to Italy, Greece and Portugal.

The Italian olive oil sector: experiences of sustainability and territorial valorisation

The presentation shared the Finoliva experience and the project launched years ago on the segmentation of the supply of quality extra virgin olive oil. The speaker presented data and experiences on the production of organic olive oil with geographical indication, as well as the experiences related to bio-district and block chain aimed at creating an innovative system of transparency for the consumer. Emphasis was placed on all the efforts towards sustainability (economic, environmental and societal) and as such on the role that the Italian and European olive growing can play in this direction.

The Oleum Project results

In the [presentation](#), the expert introduced the Oleum project objectives and results, based on developing better detection methods in order to guarantee olive oil quality and authenticity, fostering prevention of olive oil fraud.

The expert pointed out that the OLEUM project has built and implemented a harmonized methodology of prevention and control called "Quantitative Panel Test". The activities related to this research resulted in the development of reference materials, screening methods and one validated method (MS/FID) of analysis of selected volatile molecules to be proposed for adoption to official control bodies. This last method was developed considering the minimum number of highly diagnostic compounds with a demonstrated influence on aroma. The information obtained by this analysis may be useful to confirm or disconfirm the classification of the product category by the panel test, in case of disagreement between two panels.

Another line of research concerned the development and fine-tuning of a method for the determination of the total content of hydroxytyrosol and tyrosol in olive oil, which is fundamental to give certainty in the attestation of the health claim concerning polyphenols in olive oil. The expert also informed on the work carried out developing a software to estimate the "best before date" of extra virgin olive oils.

Finally, the expert presented the OLEUM Databank, an effective tool for the storage and retrieval of validated data of a heterogeneous nature, and the OLEUM Network, created with the aim of expanding expertise in olive oil analysis. This Network provides the opportunity to transfer the analytical knowledge obtained in the project through a series

of training courses and workshops, allowing stakeholders to take part in the validation process and consumers to acquire a deeper knowledge on olive oil, by infographics and reliable information spread by social networks.

AOB

CAP reform and on-going discussions on secondary legislation

A brief summary of the on-going CAP reform was presented by DG AGRI, in particular in relation to the secondary legislation. The new Strategic Plan Regulation will extend the fruit & vegetables model of sectoral interventions to other sectors, including olive oil. One of the most significant changes compared to the current work programmes in the olive sector, available in Italy, Greece and France, is that these programmes must be implemented by Producer Organisations (PO) and that the funds allocated will be based on the value of the marketed production by the PO. Other producing Member States can implement programmes in the olive oil sector via the intervention in “other sectors”.

US additional duties on olive oil and table olives/US additional duties on ripe olives from Spain

The final panel report of the World Trade Organization (WTO) on US additional duties to Spanish ripe olives was published during the meeting and the result was announced to participants. The panel report ruled that US countervailing duties are illegal under WTO rules. DG AGRI thanked the collaboration to those involved in the process.

4. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

No conclusions nor recommendations or opinions to report.

5. Next steps

No further steps were agreed.

6. Next meeting

The dates of the future meetings will be communicated at the later stage.

7. List of participants - Annex

(e-signed)

Michael SCANNELL

List of participants– Minutes
Meeting of the Horticulture, Olives and Spirits – Subgroup Olives sector
19 November 2021

Member organisation	Number of Persons
European agri-cooperatives (COGECA)	7
European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC)	2
European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA)	1
European farmers (COPA)	7
European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT)	2
European Liaison Committee for Agriculture and agri-food trade (CELCAA)	2
FoodDrinkEurope (FoodDrinkEurope)	6
IFOAM Organics Europe	1
Stichting BirdLife Europe (BirdLife Europe)	1