



Brussels,
AGRI.E.3/PB/S/6077102

MINUTES

Meeting of the Expert Group EU Meat Market Observatory

6 June 2023

Chair: AGRI E3 Animal Products

Experts present: experts from all member organisations were present, except for ECVC.

1. Approval of the agenda and of the minutes of previous meeting

2. Nature of the meeting- Non-public virtual meeting

3. List of points discussed

- Beef market situation;
- Pigmear market situation;
- EU beef import analysis;
- Trends in sales of meat products - presentation by EuroCommerce;
- Meat trade issues - presentation by UECEBV.

4. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

- o On the beef market, the Meat MO highlighted a strong decline of EU supply that keeps prices high, despite a slight decrease in the last weeks. The EU herd is reducing, continuing the trend observed in past years. High output prices and stabilising feed prices in the last months allowed to partly cope with increased input costs, but the situation remains complicated also in relation with weather conditions. Animals are slaughtered at a lower weight due to high costs for finishing that makes it difficult to reach the usual final weight.
- o The Meat MO also stressed that EU imports are increasing to a worrying extent and that high internal prices and low EU supply is favouring third country suppliers.

- o On pigmeat, the EU Meat MO noted that there is a strong decrease in pig production that is forecasted to continue for the second part of the year, including in the main producing Member States.
- o Pig carcass prices as well as piglet prices continue to be very high. Participants expressed concerns regarding the costs of producers' raw materials. Uncertainty over upcoming animal welfare requirements, including animal welfare labelling, continues to be a serious concern for the sector.
- o On international trade, the Meat MO noted decreased pigmeat exports towards all main destinations, except for Japan. The EU remains the main exporter in the global market, and China is still the main importer with 30% of the EU's export share.
- o A beef import analysis was provided in the form of an overview of in- and out-of-quota imports from the main suppliers. Data show that only a few suppliers (i.e. Brazil) can export fresh beef to the EU out of quota, thanks to its strong competitiveness on international markets. While the Meat MO expressed concerns in relation to the increasing opening of the EU market, it was also stressed that confining market access volumes within TRQs (due to the sensitive character of beef in international negotiations) can effectively limit the amount of imported beef from the main suppliers.
- o Eurocommerce presented trends in sales of meat products and the evolution of meat consumption patterns in the EU from a retail perspective. Sales of meat went up in value but sales volumes have decreased since 2022, driven by high food inflation and growing price sensitivity among consumers.
- o The market share of private labels increased in response to food inflation while on line sales are expected to grow moderately.
- o Due to technical problems, UECBV could not present its work on the main trade issues. However, a comprehensive written summary has been provided and the point will be addressed at the next meeting of the MMO.

5. Next steps

The Meat MO will keep monitoring the situation and evolution of the beef and veal, and pigmeat markets, paying particular attention to challenges emerging from increased input costs, international trade, animal diseases, food inflation and changing consumption patterns.

6. Next meeting

The next meeting of the Meat MO is scheduled for 16 October 2023 (tbc).

7. List of participants

The list of participants is attached to the minutes.

(e-signed)

Pierre BASCOU

List of participants– Minutes
Meeting of the Expert Group EU Meat Market Observatory
6 June 2023

Organisations
Centre de liaison des industries transformatrices de viande de l'UE (CLITRAVI)
EuroCommerce
Europea, Council of Young farmers (CEJA)
European agri-cooperatives (COGECA)
European farmers (COPA)
Union Européenne du Commerce du Bétail et des Métiers de la Viande (UECBV)