



Meat MO Economic Board

26 October 2020

- o The 14th meeting of the Economic Board of the Meat Market Observatory (Meat MO) took place on 26 October 2020, with the participation of experts from the meat supply chain.
- o The Commission's presentations on the beef and pigmeat markets (see Annexes I and II) provided the basis for the exchange of views.
- o For the beef and veal market, already weak before the COVID-19 crisis, discussions showed that, although the beef market has not recovered levels comparable to previous years, there were some positive signs of stabilisation. Unfortunately, the new set of COVID-19 measures being put in place in a number of Member States keeps the sector under pressure. The current and future evolution of internal EU consumption, in particular in and out of home consumption, economic developments around the coronavirus, the Farm to Fork Strategy and Brexit are matters of major concern.
- o For pigmeat, participants expressed concerns about prices and international trade. Discussions mainly touched upon African Swine Fever (ASF) recently found in wild boar in Germany and subsequent import restrictions of German pig products by several third countries, slaughter capacity and COVID-19 infections amongst workers in slaughterhouses, and renewed stricter measures to control a second wave of coronavirus infections in several Member States. All this is fuelling uncertainty about the future development of the pigmeat market.
- o A matter of concern for the meat sector remains the current evolution of meat consumption patterns in the EU, in particular the respective share of the various consumption segments (foodservices, processing, retail). In this respect, Eurocommerce provided a presentation on trends in sales of meat products from a retail perspective (see Annex III).
- o The closure of foodservices impacted more the consumption of expensive cuts such as steaks than white meats such as poultry and pork. A vast majority of consumers still consider meat as a stable part of their diets, although they are increasingly cautious on prices.
- o The Meat MO will keep monitoring the situation and evolution of the beef and veal, and pigmeat markets paying particular attention to the challenges that the new COVID-19 measures, ASF situation, Brexit and other events of the kind pose for the immediate future.
- o The next meeting of the Meat MO Economic Board is scheduled for the first quarter of 2021, precise date to be confirmed.