



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

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**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANTS, ANIMALS, FOOD AND FEED  
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2016  
(Section Seeds and Propagating Material for Agriculture and Horticulture)**

*CIRCABC Link:* <https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/858cf3e5-c40c-4bdc-9b53-4730010eb949>

**A.01 Presentation of a French report on the organisation of a temporary experiment regarding field inspection under official supervision for basic and bred seeds prior to basic seeds.**

France presented a report on the temporary experiment (Commission Decision 2012/340/EU). In 2015 ten Member States were participating in the experiment. The results so far are very good (overall 0,10 % deviation to official check testing) and the levels of official check testing should be further decreased down to 5%. In the ad hoc Working Group discussion and exchanges have taken place on the modalities of field inspection including licencing of field inspectors. The Working Group will continue to address post-controls. The next meeting will take place in March 2017. A discussion took place on the need to extend the experiment in 2017 to maximum 7 years. Member States expressed the need to amend the basic Directive on marketing seed before the temporary experiment ends as to allow field inspection under official supervision for pre-basic and basic seed.

**A.02 Report on the implementation of Commission Decision 2004/842/EC on the placing on the market of seed of not yet listed varieties.**

Postponed.

**A.03 Report on the implementation of Regulation (EC) N° 217/2006 as regards the authorisation of Member States to permit temporarily the marketing of seed not satisfying the requirements in respect of the minimum germination.**

The Commission presented the report on the use of a derogatory system to allow marketing of seed with lower germination rate in case of supply difficulties. The number of authorisations has been the lowest since the introduction of the system, because of the reduced number of requests and a high number of accepted offers of available seed from other Member States. A short discussion took place. It was

underlined that the requests should contain several varieties and that the system has not been developed to authorise individual seed lots.

**A.04 New temporary experiment on true potato seed: presentation of a working document.**

The Commission presented an updated working document on a new temporary experiment on true potato seeds. Member States provided technical comments on the draft and a short discussion took place. Member States were invited to send further comments in writing by Friday, 7 October 2016.

**A.05 Update on EU equivalence requests: presentation of the final report on Moldova.**

The Commission presented the overview of the final report on the Moldova seed equivalence audit (14 – 21 June 2016). Official controls for seed production and certification of seeds are organised appropriately. National legislation is generally appropriate, however, there are some minor discrepancies in seed quality standards for maize, sorghum and certain vegetable species. National registration of plant varieties, field inspections of seed producing crops and seed sampling and testing are carried out according to international standards and fulfil EU requirements. Pre- and post control of seeds is not fully in line with OECD standards. The Action Plan received addresses recommendations satisfactorily. Government Decisions fully harmonise standards with EU requirements and rules for the implementation of post-controls with additional guarantees were revised. The Commission will follow-up the implementation of post-controls in the 2016/2017 season. The Commission gave a short update on the old requests (Ukraine, Brazil, Moldova in internal process and Bolivia to be evaluated) and informed about a new request from Senegal.

**A.06 Member States' requests to be released from the obligation to apply the basic Directives to certain species: presentation of a working document.**

The Commission presented a working document. Commission Decision 2010/680/EU releases several Member States from the obligation to apply the various seed marketing Directives with regard to certain species. As a follow-up to the temporary experiment on new fodder plant seed mixtures, the scope of Directive 66/402/EC is extended to cover new species. Applications have been received from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Hungary, Slovenia and the United Kingdom to be released from the obligation to apply the Directive to the new species. Sweden asked for clarification of the term “not normally reproduced or marketed” used in Article 23a of the Directive. The Commission asked for written comments by 4 October 2016.

**A.07 Presentation on the security of labels and traceability in the vegetable sector.**

A representative of Plantum, the Dutch association of the plant reproductive material sector, provided a presentation on traceability and security of labels in the vegetable seed sector. The presentation demonstrated that internal quality management systems, including measures to trace lots back to production field by internal numbering

(products and lots) and labels, can efficiently impede the occurrence of fraud and that official serial numbers would not add to security in this sector.

**A.08 Exchange of views on the use of common names.**

The Commission presented an update on some issues with regard to the use of both scientific and vernacular names of species in the marketing Directives, in particular in Directives 2002/55/EC and 2008/72/EC. The Commission announced that it will send in due time a questionnaire to Member States to assess how the listing of both scientific and vernacular names is reflected in the national implementation of the Directives.

**A.09 Follow-up of the VCU Experts' Seminar held in Croatia, 5-7 September 2016.**

The Commission provided a follow-up on the EU VCU Experts' Seminar held in Osijek, Croatia, 5-7 September 2016. The seminar addressed organisational and institutional developments in national VCU testing, methods and models of VCU testing, results from the Disease Working Group on yellow rust and the consequences of registration of varieties for agro-biodiversity. France agreed to give a presentation on the identification of varieties suitable for organic agriculture.

**B.01 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Directive amending Council Directive 66/401/EEC as regards the inclusion of new species and the botanical name of the species *Lolium x boucheanum* Kunth.**

A short discussion took place. One Member State raised the issue of the inclusion of species not used in the temporary experiment. The Commission announced that the list of species will be reviewed in 3-5 years time. The NL abstained and gave the following declaration: 'It is unclear what the exact impact of the inclusion of these new species in fodder plant mixtures will be, especially regarding the consequences of allowing mixtures containing varieties which have not been listed in the Common Catalogue as fodder plants (thus not based on DUS and VCU).'

**Vote taken:** Favourable opinion.

**B.02 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Directive amending Directives 2003/90/EC and 2003/91/EC setting out implementing measures for the purposes of Article 7 of Council Directive 2002/53/EC and Article 7 of Council Directive 2002/55/EC respectively, as regards the characteristics to be covered as a minimum by the examination and the minimum conditions for examining certain varieties of agricultural plant species and vegetable species.**

The Commission presented the text highlighting the new and revised technical protocols issued by the Community Plant Variety Office and the UPOV. There were no comments from Member States.

**Vote taken:** Favourable opinion.

**B.03 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision repealing Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2016/17 which authorised the United Kingdom to prohibit on its territory the marketing of a variety of hemp listed in the Common Catalogue of varieties of agricultural plant species, pursuant to Council Directive 2002/53/EC.**

The Commission presented the reason for repealing the Implementing Decision voted last year. There were no comments from Member States.

**Vote taken:** Favourable opinion.

**M.01 ESCAA**

Austria and Poland gave a follow-up of the June meeting of ESCAA (European Seed Certification Agencies Association) and proposed to amend the requirements for soybean, in particular the germination rate, the threshold for inert matter and the inclusion of quality pests. The proposal will be discussed in the next Standing Committee meeting.

**M.02 Poland**

On the request of Poland the Commission provided an update on the state of the EPPO Quality Pest Project. A meeting of the extended Horizontal Experts' Working Group finalised the methodology in September 2016. Stakeholders and National Plant Protection Organisations will submit the filled out questionnaires by the end of October 2016. One Member State commented that the questionnaires did not provide the possibility to give comments. The Commission replied that standardised information is necessary as a basis for the project.

**M.03 Spain**

Spain presented its request for a derogation with regard to varietal purity of a variety of barley. During field inspections a rate of off-type plants higher than acceptable was detected. As the demand for this variety is very high, this situation leads to an insufficient supply. A derogation with a duration of 2 years is needed to multiply sufficient amounts of seed to overcome the current shortfall of supply.

**M.04 Common Catalogues**

The Commission informed that discussions are on-going to get the support of CPVO for administering the databases of registered varieties and the so called not yet listed varieties in the Common Catalogues. Member States expressed support for this initiative as it would reduce administrative burden. The Commission will keep the Member States updated on the project.

**M.05 OECD Technical Working Group**

The Commission reminded the Member States about the issues which require preparations for the next OECD Technical Working Group meeting taking place end

of January 2017: revision of Seed Schemes Strategic Plan and Action Plan, role of biochemical and molecular techniques (BMT) in variety registration/protection and certification, rules on information on the non-official part of the label, varietal seed mixtures, technical requirements for buckwheat seed and other information on the label. The discussion will continue in the next Standing Committee meeting.