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Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed

Section *Plant Health*

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SUMMARY REPORT

A.01 Evaluation of recent import interceptions with harmful organisms by Member States and the actions taken, including citrus fruit from Argentina and from South Africa.

The Commission and the Member States discussed the interceptions for the period between 9 July and 9 September 2020.

As regards imports, the Commission presented an overview of the citrus interceptions and reviewed the series of actions taken against those interceptions, including the actions that led to the temporary ban of imports of lemons and oranges from Argentina as a result of an unprecedentedly high number of interceptions due to *Phyllosticta citricarpa*. The Commission also referred to the increasing number of interceptions of *Thaumatotibia leucotreta* on citrus fruits from South Africa and reminded that a mandate has been sent to EFSA in order to assess the effectiveness of the systems approach applied by South Africa. The Commission and Member States agreed to continue monitoring closely the situation and to act should there be further negative developments.

In addition, the Commission highlighted the interceptions of *Anoplophora chinensis* on *Acer palmatum* from Japan, the interceptions of *Spodoptera frugiperda* on *Capsicum* species, *Xanthosoma* and *Rosa* from Uganda, Suriname and Rwanda, the interceptions of *Thaumatotibia leucotreta* on *Capsicum* species from Rwanda and Ghana, on *Solanum melongena* from Kenya and on *Rosa* from Uganda, Kenya, Ehtiopia, Rwanda and Tanzania.

As regards internal EU trade, the Commission referred to the interceptions of *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (pinewood nematode) on wood packaging material from Portugal. Portugal presented the actions taken in response to those interceptions and informed that investigations are ongoing.

A.02 Evaluation of recent outbreaks of harmful organisms notified by Member States and of the control actions taken, including overview of the *Xylella* situation in the Member States concerned.

The Commission presented the overview of the outbreaks notified by the Member States in the period from 8 July to 7 September 2020. Italy gave information on the

notification related to *Hypocryphalus scabricollis* - a non-regulated pest, found on plants of *Ficus carica*- and the notification related to a finding of *Popillia japonica*. Spain and Portugal presented the latest information regarding outbreaks of *Trioza erytreae* in their territory. Croatia gave further information related to an outbreak of *Aleurocanthus spiniferus*.

France provided an update on the new outbreak of *X. fastidiosa* subsp. *multiplex* detected in the region of Occitanie. Plants of lavender were found infected in a nursery, in open field. Surveillance of the area concerned as well as trace-back activities were ongoing to confirm the origin of the outbreak. The area was demarcated in line with new *Xylella* Regulation (EU) 2020/1201, eradication measures were being taken, while movement restrictions were in place. France also informed that eradication measures were ongoing in PACA region.

Italy informed that in Apulia, survey activities were ongoing both in the buffer zone and in the part of the infected zone adjacent to it and they were expected to be concluded soon. Italy also informed that some infected plants were detected in the part of the infected zone adjacent to the buffer zone and they were currently being removed. A list of nurseries authorised by Italy to export specified plants out of that area was presented. In Tuscany, eradication measures were ongoing in line with the new *Xylella* provisions.

Portugal provided an update of the ongoing activities in the demarcated area of Porto, where more than thirty plant species had been found infected by *X. fastidiosa* subsp. *multiplex*. Survey activities were ongoing, as well as felling and control on movement restrictions.

Spain informed that the demarcated area of Alicante, subject to eradication, was recently updated in line with the new *Xylella* Regulation (EU) 2020/1201 (buffer zones reduced to 2.5 km and clearcut zones to 50 m). In line with new provisions, Spain also informed that the planting of specified plants which were never found infected to *multiplex* for the last two years was authorised in the infected zones (e.g. olives). Felling and monitoring activities were ongoing. In Balears, subject to containment measures, the situation was rather stable. A first nursery was authorised to export specified plants out of the islands. In the outbreak of Madrid, no additional findings were reported.

The Commission informed that, following the new *Xylella* provisions applicable to import of host plants, a letter was being prepared with aim to ask third countries to confirm the validity of their current declarations of pest free countries/pest free areas in line with Regulation (EU) 2020/1201 (e.g. *Xylella* status confirmed by sampling and molecular testing). Replies by third countries are expected by 31 December 2020. In case of negative reply, trade of host plants will be suspended while waiting for new information.

The Commission also clarified that Member States might conclude, if needed for operational reasons, the ongoing 2020 survey campaign in the demarcated areas without switching to a statistical approach as required by the new *Xylella* Regulation (EU) 2020/1201. However, samples taken shall be analysed, in line with new provisions, with molecular tests listed in Annex IV of that Regulation.

A.03 EFSA newsletters on horizon scanning of media and literature for new and emerging plant health risks; EPPO monthly reporting service on harmful organisms.

The EFSA media newsletters and the EFSA pilot of scientific literature newsletters of August and September 2020 and the EPPO Reporting Service No. 7 and 8 of 2020 have been disseminated to Member States.

A.04 Exchange of views on the introduction of unsolicited small seeds packages from third countries by private persons in the EU.

The Commission presented the information submitted by several Member States and other third countries about unsolicited seeds that are sent from some Asian countries to many European citizens, without respecting legal requirements (like absence of phytosanitary and quality assurances). Some Member States informed about the steps taken to investigate the issue. The exact extent of this case is not known yet and the background is still under investigation.

The Commission asked for more information, such as pictures and details about the packages, and requested the Member States to provide all further information via the iRASFF platform. Further the Commission informed that the Member States' contact points of the seed fraud network collaborate on this issue. The Commission will continue its activities for coordinating and assisting Member States in order to stop these fraudulent activities.

A.05 Acceptability of electronic phytosanitary certificates from Brazil and Colombia in the context of the COVID-19 crisis .

In order to respond to recent concerns raised by certain Member States about the validity of electronic phytosanitary certificates issued by Colombia and Brazil, the Commission clarified the applicable rules.

The Commission reminded the Member States' representatives of the conditions for a phytosanitary certificate to be qualified as electronic as laid down in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1715 and of the temporary measures linked to the COVID-19 crisis laid down in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/466.

Currently, only consignments of plants, plants products and other objects covered by a phytosanitary certificate issued electronically in TRACES by the five French overseas territories (Guadeloupe, Martinique, Réunion, Guyane and Mayotte) can be permanently exempted from the original paper phytosanitary certificates.

The Commission also informed that data on phytosanitary certificates, even if not electronically signed, produced in TRACES by Tunisia or sent through the IPPC ePhyto Hub to TRACES by USA, Argentina, Morocco, Chile, Costa Rica, Samoa, Fiji, Mexico and Jamaica can temporarily replace original paper phytosanitary certificates.

However, Brazil and Colombia are not amongst the aforementioned listed countries and thus those countries shall provide copies of phytosanitary certificates in view of official controls pending the presentation of the original of the official certificates when technically feasible in accordance with Article 4(1)(a) of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/466.

The Commission committed to regularly update the Member States on the issue and in particular inform about any other countries that can benefit permanently or temporarily from the presentation of original paper phytosanitary certificates.

A.06 Report of the Working Group meeting for reduced frequency of import inspections on fruit, vegetables, cut flowers and wood and exchange of views on the proposed frequencies for 2021.

The Commission presented the outcome of the working group that on 21 July 2020 had discussed the reports submitted by Member States for 2019 application of the reduced frequency of import inspections. For some ‘trades’ (commodity x origin combinations), for which the outcome of the working group was not conclusive, the discussion in the Committee shall take place once the additional information becomes available (e.g. feedback on the Commission’s audit in Kenya on export of cut flowers of roses). The conclusion on the 2021 inspection rates was therefore postponed.

A.07 Exchange of views on possible emergency measures for *Meloidogyne graminicola*.

The Commission presented and discussed with Member States the amended draft on *Meloidogyne graminicola*. The Commission will look into a number of issues such as the planting of host plants in the infested zone and the use of rice seeds harvested from infested fields.

A.08 Exchange of views on the update of the technical Annexes of Regulation (EU) 2019/2072.

The Commission continued the discussion with the Member States on the first amendment of the Annexes of Implementing Regulation 2019/2072. The amendment is anticipated to be a comprehensive draft act, comprising the inclusion of new pests as Union quarantine pests and Union regulated non-quarantine pests, further refinements in the list of Union quarantine pests, new import and internal movement requirements and a further refinement of the CN codes of regulated commodities.

A.09 Exchange of views on containment measures for *Aleurocanthus spiniferus* under Article 28.2 of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031.

The Commission presented and discussed with Member States the containment measure for *Aleurocanthus spiniferus*. Member States were asked to communicate the containment areas, making the distinction between infected zone and buffer zone at the level of administrative regions.

A.10 Exchange of views on containment measures for *Ceratocystis platani* under Article 28.2 of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031.

The Commission presented and discussed with Member States the containment measure for *Ceratocystis platani*. Member States were asked to communicate the containment areas, making the distinction between infected zone and buffer zone at the level of administrative regions.

A.11 Exchange of views on containment measures for *Flavescence dorée* under Article 28.2 of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031.

The Commission presented and discussed further with Member States the containment measure for *Flavescence dorée* phytoplasma. Further refinements have

been discussed aiming at giving clarity and assurances in the containment strategy for this pest.

A.12 Exchange of views on containment measures for *Popillia japonica* under Article 28.2 of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031.

The Commission presented and discussed with Member States the containment measure for *Popillia japonica*. Member States were asked to communicate the containment areas, making the distinction between infected zone and buffer zone at the level of administrative regions.

A.13 Exchange of views on containment measures for *Toxoptera citricida* under Article 28.2 of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031.

The Commission presented and discussed with Member States the containment measure for *Toxoptera citricida*. Member States were asked to communicate the containment areas, making the distinction between infected zone and buffer zone at the level of administrative regions.

A.14 Exchange of views on the renewal of temporary protected zones on the basis of Member States' surveillance reports from previous years.

The Commission presented a draft overview of the needed extensions of the status of the temporary protected zones, and confirmed that the act would be separate from the first amendment of the other elements in the technical annexes of Regulation (EU) No. 2019/2072 that is being discussed under the point A.08 of this report. Slovenia requested a correction in line with its earlier request. There were no further comments on the draft proposal. The Commission will now work towards preparing the text ready for vote as soon as possible.

A.15 Overview of Member States' 2019 survey results and state of play of *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* in Portugal and Spain.

Postponed.

A.16 Exchange of views on the need to update the emergency measures Decision 2012/535/EU for *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*.

Postponed.

A.17 Exchange of views on the draft Work Programme for EU co-financing of phytosanitary measures in 2021 and 2022 under the new Single Market Programme 2021-2027.

The Commission presented a revised draft Phytosanitary Work Programme for 2021-2022 (technical part only) detailing the conditions for EU-cofinancing in the area of surveillance, eradication and containment. New priorities, both in terms of pests and activities, eligible for co-financing, subject to budget availability, were presented for exchange of views.

A.18 State of play on the development of new methodology for simplifying the financial management of plant health under the Single Market Programme - Commission's Joint Research Centre.

The Commission updated the Member States on the latest developments of the simplification process and the financial management of future plant health surveys since July 2020. The contracted activities calculation were explained in detail by the Joint Research Centre of the Commission and DG SANTE.

A.19 Exchange of views on an amendment of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2019 as regards *Jasminum polyanthum* plants from Israel.

The Commission presented the main conclusions of the scientific opinion by the European Food Safety Authority on the commodity risk assessments of *Jasminum polyanthum* plants from Israel and presented the proposed way forward for the concerned commodity as regards the technical aspects that should be taken into account for its delisting. The Commission informed that the Member States will be consulted on those technical aspects once the internal legislative procedure is finalised.

A.20 Outcome of the EU-US bilateral meeting of the Plant Health Technical Working Group on 14-15 May 2020.

The Commission referred to the available conclusions of this meeting. It was highlighted that APHIS informed the Commission that the existing EU import requirements against *Pantoea stewartii* on maize seeds have now been considered to remain acceptable for US maize seed export to the EU.

A.21 Request by the US for the prolongation and extension to hard wood of the derogation for the import of US ammunition boxes from ISPM 15 requirements.

The Commission informed about an Expert Group scheduled for 23 September, where a draft derogation on wood packaging material in the form of ammunition boxes from US will be discussed. The legal base of such possible derogation will be Article 43 of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031.

A.22 Phytosanitary aspects of EU-UK trade: state of play of implementation of Decision (EU) 2020/758 on UK national measures and preparedness for the EU-UK trade from 1 January 2021 onwards.

The Commission presented the state of play of the EU – UK relations with regards to plant health rules. It informed the Member States that the UK will notify its import rules in October.

A.23 Exchange of views on the report of the Commission audit DG(SANTE) 2019-6741 from 5 to 13 November 2019 in Montenegro to evaluate the Plant Health controls applied in the potato sector.

Postponed.

A.24 Exchange of views on the request of third countries concerning the import requirements for ToBRFV on tomato seeds – Regulation (EU) 2020/1191.

The Commission informed of several requests received by third countries as regards Article 9 of Regulation 2020/1191 on import requirements and the difficulties to comply with the additional declarations for seed already harvested.

To this regard, the Commission discussed a draft Regulation with an exemption for seed in storage before 15 August 2020. This will address trade partners concerns and will be in line with Article 7 on internal movement.

Member States were in favour of the presented amendment and the Commission informed about the next steps of the legal process.

B.01 Exchange of views and possible technical opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on emergency action against a plant pest in the Union and third countries.

No item raised.

B.02 Exchange of views and possible technical opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation on amendment of Articles 7 and 8 of Regulation 2019/2072

The Commission presented an amendment to clarify that this act applies without prejudice to other implementing acts adopted pursuant to different legal bases of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031. The members of the Committee suggested to add references to the acts adopted pursuant to Article 42 (high risk plants) and Article 49 (plants presenting new risks).

B.03 Exchange of views and possible technical opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision repealing Decision 2004/200/EC on Pepino mosaic virus

The Commission presented the draft act on the repeal of the measure of Pepino Mosaic Virus which is the result of re-assessment of the risk related to this pest.

C.01 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation concerning types or species of plants for planting for which the exemption referred to in Article 83(2) of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 does not apply and repealing Commission Directive 92/105/EEC.

The Commission presented a revised proposal for the Regulation. In reaction to the previous discussion in the Committee in July, it refocused the Annex to the most risky plants. In the discussion, while some Member States expressed their reservations over the proposal, others supported the revised text. As requested, a longer transitional period will be introduced in the proposal, so as to facilitate a smooth phasing-in of the practical arrangements for operators when issuing plant passports. The Commission will prepare a new revision of the text for a written consultation of the Member States.

M.01 National phytosanitary systems

The Commission invited Member States to submit case studies on good practices for monitoring and evaluation of national phytosanitary systems to the IPPC Secretariat, in response to the related IPPC call.

M.02 Canada EU plant health import requirements and arrangements.

The Commission introduced an overview of questions it has received from Canada regarding EU plant health import requirements and arrangements and their implementation by Member States. Amongst other points raised, the Commission suggested that a traceability information referring to a Phytosanitary Certificate (PC) issued by Canada be accepted if the following sentence is filled in the respective Additional Declaration box in the relevant PC: *“Traceability for this consignment is achieved through phytosanitary certificate XXXXX.”*

M.03 Import of Petunia and Calibrachoa cuttings from some third countries.

Member States were informed that a draft legal act is being developed to allow the import of Petunia and Calibrachoa cuttings from some third countries under specific conditions. The draft text will be presented in a forthcoming Committee meeting.