



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 07 JULY 2016**

(Section Seeds and Propagating Material for Agriculture and Horticulture)

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

Postponed.

- A.02 Presentation of an annual report from Portugal on the organisation of a temporary experiment providing for certain derogations for the marketing of seed mixtures intended for use as fodder plants.**

The Portuguese delegate presented the final report of the experiment. The result of the experiment showed that these mixtures can provide a useful solution for the establishment of persistent and productive extensive forage crops and pastures. The Commission will send comments on the final report to Portugal by the end of August 2016.

- A.03 Presentation of an annual report from the United Kingdom on the organisation of a temporary experiment providing for certain derogations for the marketing of populations of the plant species wheat, barley, oats and maize pursuant to Council Directive 66/402/EEC.**

The delegate from the United Kingdom presented the second report on the application of the temporary experiment. Participating Member States are Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Italy and the United Kingdom. In total 30 applications were received and 10 authorisations granted.

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

The Commission presented a draft working document outlining the elements of a temporary experiment on the marketing of seed potatoes derived from True Potato

Seed. The Member States welcomed this document as it provides for the possibility to explore regulatory issues with regard to an innovation in the breeding industry. Several technical details were discussed and Member States were invited to send written comments by 31 August 2016. The Commission informed that a Recommendation on the requirements for True Potato Seed is currently being drafted.

A.05 Follow-up on derogations from size requirements for seed potatoes.

The Commission presented the reasoning behind the withdrawal of a draft proposal on a derogation from size requirements for seed potatoes produced by micro-propagation techniques. France pointed out that as a consequence of this reasoning certain provisions of Directive 2002/56/EC do not apply to pre-basic seed potatoes and that it should be explored if Commission Implementing Directive 2014/21/EU should be amended.

A.06 Update on the EPPQ quality pest project.

The Commission presented the draft methodology, the questionnaire, and both horizontal expert working groups. The Commission informed that there will be sectorial working groups for the different groups of seed and propagating material. The deadline for responding to the questionnaire, sent out in July 2016, is end of October 2016.

A.07 Exchange of views on the indication of the scope of the Directives (e.g. Directive 2002/55/EC): need of common names.

The Commission presented a working document laying out some issues with 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. Member States were not in favour of the option of deleting vernacular names from the Directives.

A.08 Switzerland-EU bilateral agreement: possible inclusion of legislation on fruit species.

The Commission informed the Member States about the preparation of a draft decision of the EU-Switzerland Joint Committee that will recognise the conformity of the legislation on vegetable seed of both parties. The adoption of the decision is planned for the end of the year.

A.09 Reporting obligation concerning seed potatoes produced in so called high-grade regions (Commission Decision 2004/3/EC).

The Commission informed the Member States about the reporting obligation in Article 2 of Commission Decision 2004/3/EC. A short discussion followed after which it was concluded that reporting will be done in December 2017.

A.10 Exchange of views on a Danish derogation request according to Article 24 of Commission Directive 2002/54/EC as regards the maximum content of inert matter in lots of beet seed.

Denmark presented the justification for the derogation request concerning beet seed not meeting the requirement concerning the maximum content of inert matter. A short discussion followed and it was concluded that the request is justified. The Commission will proceed with the procedure for adopting the derogation.

A.11 Update on EU equivalence requests: presentation of the final report on Brazil; update on Moldova.

The Commission presented the overview of the final report on Brazil seed equivalence audit (14-19 April 2016). The Brazilian authorities addressed the identified shortcomings by preparing a dedicated seed certification system for the export of seed to the EU. The received draft normative instruction for the seed certification of seed to be exported to the EU is fully harmonised with the OECD Seed Schemes and EU requirements. The recommendation is fully addressed when the normative instruction will be adopted, which is planned for September 2016, and appropriately implemented. A short discussion followed.

The Commission presented an update on the seed equivalence audit to Moldova (14-21 June 2016). Overall, the national authorities responsible for the implementation of seed certification are competent and operate appropriately and all activities are carried out officially. However, there are some minor discrepancies in seed quality standards and post-control is not implemented fully in line with OECD requirements.

The Commission informed that the Ukrainian equivalence request is still subject to the internal Commission procedures.

A.12 Update on ISTA accreditation.

The Commission presented the state of play concerning the use of the term 'accreditation' by the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA). ISTA had informed the Commission that a survey among its members had shown that the use of the term 'authorisation' could be an alternative, but that ISTA continues to assess the risks with changing the terminology.

A.13 Follow-up on OECD Seed Scheme matters: presentation of the outcome of the annual meeting.

The Commission presented a short report of the meeting. As follow-up there is a need to prepare EU positions in particular on the following topics: revision of the Strategic Plan and Action Plan, role of biochemical and molecular techniques (BMT) in variety registration/protection and certification, rules on non-official part of the label, varietal seed mixtures, technical requirements for buckwheat seed and addressing critical issues in the OECD Seed Schemes (dispute settlement).

A.14 Follow-up on ESCAA matters: presentation of the outcome of the annual meeting.

The Commission presented a short report. As an immediate follow-up there was a need to inform Member States about the EPPO quality pest project, re-analyse the germination rate of soybean seed, discuss implementation of new marketing categories and requirements for potato seeds and address the rules on the implementation of the procedure concerning not yet listed varieties. Work will continue on the following topics: security of labels - implementation of serial number for labels, sampling guidelines, flexibility for seed mixtures, review 5% of official check testing (vs. risk based approach) and multiplication of maize seed - reversed breeding.

A.15 Follow-up on UN-ECE matters: presentation of the outcome of the annual meeting.

The Commission presented a short report from the UNECE Bureau and Rapporteurs Meeting on Seed Potatoes (Kimberley, South Africa, 15-18 March 2016). The meeting resulted in the finalisation of two documents: A Guide to Seed Potato Tuber Inspection and a Guide to Operating a Seed Potato Certification Service. These two documents will be submitted for approval to the Specialised Section meeting in September 2016. The meeting also addressed the possible inclusion of true potato seed in the UNECE standard.

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 species.

Several Member States asked for clarification concerning the species scope of the draft act. United Kingdom, Sweden, Slovenia, Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Poland and Latvia informed about their intention to request a derogation from the application of the amended scope of the Directive 66/401/EEC on marketing fodder plant seed. The Commission asked to send an official derogation request by 2 September 2016.

Vote postponed

B.02 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.

Vote postponed

M.01 Germany

Germany raised the question of the taxonomic status of wild rye, which falls within or outside the scope of the marketing legislation depending on the scientific name

chosen. An initial exploration by the Commission showed that the accepted name of this species appears to be *Secale cereale* and thus will be covered by Council Directive 66/402/EEC. The Commission recommended to consult with taxonomic experts on grass species.

M.02 Denmark

Denmark raised the issue of little figurines, which grow grass from seed as hair. Seed lots were exported with OECD certificates to China for the production of the figurines, but no link can be established between the exported lots and the seed in imported figurines. It was concluded that the use of grass seed for this purpose is not within the scope of Council Directive 66/401/EEC.

M.03 Denmark

Denmark inquired on the Member State responses to a letter sent by Commissioner Andriukaitis in May 2015 about future SANTE priorities, including the options concerning plant reproductive material. The Commission responded that it is aware of a reply by the Netherlands and that it will explore which other responses were received.