



**WORKING GROUP**  
**ON PLANTS, ANIMALS, FOOD AND FEED**  
*Section Propagating material and plants of fruit genera and species*

*Section Vine*

**17 FEBRUARY 2022**

**SUMMARY**

**SECTION A**      **Information and/or discussion**

**1. The Farm to Fork Strategy and framework for a sustainable food system**

The Commission presented the goals of the Farm to Fork Strategy and the legislative initiative on a framework for a sustainable food system. The Commission explained that the legislative initiative would set the basis (*'lex generalis'*) for specific legislation (*'lex specialis'*) in the sectoral legislation and clarified that the revision of the plant reproductive material legislation should address characteristics contributing to sustainable agri-food production.

**2. Update on the revision of plant and forest reproductive material legislation**

The Commission gave an update on the revision of the legislation on plant reproductive material and the next steps. The Commission informed about the ongoing public consultation and the upcoming targeted survey, interviews and focus groups. The Commission invited Member States to pre-register for the targeted survey and participate in the public consultation. The Commission announced that the webpage had been updated. Member States welcomed the information and in general supported the initiative.

**3. Assessment of sustainability characteristics of vine varieties**

France presented their approach for assessment and registration of vine varieties. They make use of newly bred (hybrid) varieties and traditional varieties from countries with warm climates. In France, an assessment of the value for cultivation and use is mandatory whereas in the EU such assessment is only mandatory for the

registration of varieties of agricultural species. France has made progress with the assessment of characteristics contributing to sustainable production (e.g. disease resistance, reduced pesticide use) but a lot of work remains to be done. In particular, tolerance of vine varieties to abiotic stress (drought/floodings) and development/assessment of rootstock varieties with optimised water consumption remain challenging.

#### **4. Assessment of sustainability characteristics of fruit plant varieties**

Czechia and Poland presented their approach for assessment and registration of varieties of fruit plants. Czechia does not examine the value for cultivation and use but assesses sustainability characteristics of newly developed varieties such as disease resistance and suitability for specific climatic conditions or for organic production. In the case of plums, rootstock varieties tolerant to abiotic stress have been developed.

Poland explained that they have developed value for cultivation and use (VCU) tests for vegetable propagating material and fruit plants. VCU examination is a requirement for official registration of varieties in Poland.

#### **5. Certification of seed of fruit plant propagating material**

France, Germany and the Netherlands highlighted that Directive 2014/98/EU lacks provisions specific for the certification of seeds and of rootstocks produced from seeds. Under the current rules this type of material can only be marketed as CAC material because the production system does not comply with the model of a certification pyramid. The Member States concerned asked the Commission for transitional measures allowing the certification and marketing of this type of material within their territories. Member States were asked to provide written comments by 3 March 2022.

#### **6. Official Controls Regulation**

The Commission presented the Official Controls Regulation and explained that official controls during variety registration and certification carried out prior to the placing on the market of plant reproductive material would remain in the sectoral legislation. The Commission clarified which changes were considered and compared the options for future harmonised controls either in the sectoral legislation or in the scope of the Official Controls Regulation. Two Member States expressed concerns about the inclusion of plant reproductive material in the scope of the Official Controls Regulation. Member States were asked to provide written comments by 3 March 2022.

#### **7. ‘Not yet listed varieties’ and ‘Not yet fully tested material’ of fruit plant propagating material**

France and the Netherlands presented a proposal for derogating from the current marketing rules. The request concerning the marketing of pre-basic and basic material of not yet listed varieties to other nurseries would allow speeding up market access of new varieties. This material can be used for propagation and ensure the availability of sufficient quantities once the variety registration process has been completed. In

addition, both Member States asked for permission to market limited quantities of candidate pre-basic mother plants for which pathogen tests have not yet been completed. The Commission stated that these requests will be examined. Member States were asked to provide written comments by 3 March 2022.

**8. Certification of in vitro propagated material of fruit plant propagating material**

Finland and the Netherlands explained the multiplication of mother plants through in vitro propagation. They informed that the legislation does not contain any provisions for this type of production system. They explained that the sampling and testing frequencies of clones that have been micropropagated from mother plants could be reduced if the in vivo mother plant has been found free from all relevant pests and diseases. Finland highlighted the advantages of cryopreserving in vitro culture pre-basic material.

**9. Certification of polyclonal vine propagating material**

Portugal presented their approach for the selection of polyclonal vine propagating material. They highlighted the advantages of this type of propagating material and informed about the voluntary national certification scheme for polyclonal vine propagating material in Portugal.

**10. Conservation varieties of fruit plants**

Germany explained how they have implemented Directive 2008/90/EC in relation to the marketing of propagating material and fruit plants intended to help preserve genetic diversity. Eighty percent of nationally listed varieties are for the purpose of conserving genetic resources. Propagating material and fruit plants of those varieties can only be marketed in Germany.

**11. Update on a harmonised certification scheme for recognising the equivalence of fruit plants produced in third countries**

The Commission gave an oral update on the state of play of the draft Commission Implementing Decision. The Commission informed Member States that they will soon receive an official communication on the harmonised certification scheme for recognising the equivalence of fruit plants produced in third countries. The Commission stated that Member States should inform third countries from which they would like to import propagating material and fruit plants about the procedure to be followed for submitting an application for equivalence. Upon receiving applications from third countries, the Commission will assign Member States to carry out the desk study based on their experience with the import of propagating material and fruit plants from the third country concerned.