



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 21 FEBRUARY 2017
(Section Seeds and Propagating Material for Agriculture and Horticulture)**

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A.01 Exchange of views on the working programme in the areas covered by the Standing Committee for the year 2017.

The Commission presented the working programme. The existing Annexes of the Directives would need to be updated, in particular following the new Plant Health Regulation and the changes concerning quality pests applicable from 31 December 2019. An exchange of views took place. The point on use of new serial number was extended to cover label security in general. A number of Member States highlighted the need to revise the outdated basic Directives which are causing many problems in their application.

A.02 Exchange of views on a possible revision of the provisions on the quantitative restriction for maize seed in Commission Decision 2004/842/EC.

The delegate from Denmark presented its request to amend the quantitative restrictions for maize seed as to allow large scale tests and trials. The problem is there is a generally low maize seed production area and the quantitative restriction is laid down as percentage of the area allowing currently about 190 ha. The possibility of 10 ha as minimum would not suite the purpose. The request and the importance on adapted varieties was supported by another Member State. The Commission took note of the request.

A.03 Presentation of data on the evolution of the number of varieties registered in the common catalogues.

The Commission presented the evolution of the number of varieties of agricultural and vegetable crops in the common catalogues. The data show a steady annual growth and in 2016 altogether 41 362 varieties could be marketed throughout the EU. The number of new additions over the last 5 years is fairly stable, in average 1854 per year. The species with highest number of additions of new varieties in 2016 were: maize (467), wheat (232), sugar beet (155), sunflower (146), rape seed 131), barley

(127), ray grass (85) and potato (70) whereby the five leading Member States were IT, FR, DE, UK and CZ.

A.04 Discussion of the requirements for soybean, in particular the threshold for inert matter.

The delegate from Poland presented the issue on inert material. The maximum content of inert matter includes broken seed although broken seed does not effect e.g. the germination rate. However, the transfer of harmful organisms should be more closely studied. In the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) rules broken seed is included in inert material. An exchange of views took place and it was decided to establish a working group (AT, DK, CZ, DE, FR, HU and PL) to study the matter in more detail. The Commission will prepare a working document on the matter.

A.05 Update on the use of common names in the Directives 2002/55/EC and 2008/72/EEC.

The Commission informed that the work of allocating species listed in the two Directives to experts is on-going and that a meeting will be organised when this step is concluded.

A.06 Update on EU equivalence requests.

The Commission gave a short update on the situation. The requests of Ukraine, Brazil and Moldova are in the internal process. For the new requests of Bolivia and Senegal Member States experts are needed for the first step on legal evaluation. DE promised to volunteer for Bolivia and FR and DK for Senegal.

A.07 Follow-up of OECD Seed Scheme matters.

The Commission gave a short update on the outcome of the OECD Technical Working Group meeting that took place at the end of January 2017. It presented the key issue for preparing the EU positions for the next meeting in June: revision of Seed Schemes Strategic Plan and Action Plan, role of biochemical and molecular techniques (BMT) in variety registration and certification, rules on information on the non-official part of the label, varietal seed mixtures and technical requirements for buckwheat and sorghum seed as well as the notification of critical issue to the OECD Secretariat.

B.01 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision releasing certain Member States from the obligation to apply to certain species Council Directives 66/401/EEC, 66/402/EEC, 68/193/EEC, 1999/105/EC, 2002/54/EC, 2002/55/EC and 2002/57/EC on the marketing of fodder plant seed, cereal seed, material for the vegetative propagation of the vine, forest reproductive material, beet seed, vegetable seed and seed of oil and fibre plants respectively, and repealing Decision 2010/680/EU.

The Commission presented the text explaining that following the extension of the scope of the Directive 66/401/EEC on marketing fodder plant seed with new plant species a number of Member States requested new releases on applying the Directives and some Member States requested to update their release situation.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

B.02 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on the organisation of a temporary experiment under Council Directive 2002/56/EC as regards seed potato tubers derived from true potato seed.

The Commission presented the text. Following scientific and technical developments the possibility to market true potato seed for a temporary period under certain conditions is introduced. After some discussion changes were introduced to recital (5) stating that a review will take place in some years concerning the varietal identity and purity of the material.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

M.01 Denmark - situation in MSs on authorising the production of hemp for medical purposes.

The delegate from Denmark asked about the situation in the Member States on authorising the production of hemp for medical purposes. The Commission explained that hemp seed should meet the requirements for marketing as laid down in Directive 2002/57/EC on marketing seed of oil and fibre plants, however, no specific rules are laid down on the later use of the harvest product. The acceptance of hemp varieties follows the rules of Directive 2002/53/EC and a number of Member States test the varieties on tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content applying the 0.2% limit which is also a requirement for the agricultural direct payments according to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 809/2014. According to the Directive 2004/24/EC (the Herbal Directive) the classification of products and their authorisation is carried out by the Member States. AT, DE and CH informed about their national authorisation systems for herbal medicinal products.

M.02 Denmark - net gross weight of the packages

The delegate from Denmark asked whether in determining the net gross weight of the packages and containers the weight of the package and container is included. It was decided to first suggest to the European Seed Certification Agencies Association (ESCAA) to make a survey on the practices in the Member States.

M.03 Denmark - application of fertiliser on cereal seed

The delegate from Denmark asked about the practices in the Member States as regards the application of fertiliser on cereal seed and other innovative practices such as products supporting germination. This is normally carried out after certification and on demand. It was decided to first suggest to ESCAA to carry out a survey on the practices in the Member States.

M.04 Denmark - EU legislation as regards production and marketing of seed mixture

The delegate from Denmark asked about the EU legislation as regards production and marketing of seed mixtures (species, varieties of same species) for game feeding and soil improvement and for non-commercial purposes. The Commission clarified that the Directives on marketing plant reproductive material apply irrespective of the end-user of seed, only transfer such as for testing or research (non-commercial activities purposes) are out of the scope of the Directives.

M.05 Germany - reference material from MSs

The delegate from Germany informed that it is still facing problems to receive reference material from other Member States authorities, who carried out variety registration, to carry out post-controls trial. The established contact list has not removed the problem. The Commission suggested to discuss bilaterally and to contact the concerned Member States.