



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Health and Food Safety Directorate General

sante.ddg2.g.5(2020)3980282

Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed
Section *Seeds and Propagating Material for Agriculture and Horticulture*
12 June 2020

CIRCABC Link: <https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/2a9589b9-b762-4abb-a375-8bbbd6a35032>

SUMMARY REPORT

A.01 Exchange of views on a working document on the update of certain botanical names listed in Directives 66/401/EEC and 66/402/EEC.

The Commission presented the draft outlining the changes introduced since the last meeting. Several Member States and the CPVO proposed small editorial changes. The Commission will prepare a draft implementing act for the next meeting.

A.02 Exchange of views on a working document on the preparations of a temporary experiment on organic varieties.

The Commission presented a working document and summarised the outcome of the experts working group meeting that took place on 5 February 2020. The Commission presented a potential list of priority species and proposed that adapted DUS and VCU protocols should be developed in small working groups with the participation of CPVO, Member States and experts from stakeholders. Member States supported in general the proposals for priority species and suggested one additional species.

A.03 Exchange of views on a working document on an amendment of the Annexes of the Directives in relation to bio-molecular techniques.

The Commission presented the first draft. Some Member States supported an amendment of the Council Directives 66/401/EEC, 66/402/EEC, 2002/54/EEC, 2002/55/EEC and 2002/57/EEC and welcomed the proposed draft. One Member State raised the question whether rules of vine and fruit would also be introduced. The Commission asked for written comments by 26 June 2020.

A.04 Presentation by the Commission and exchange of views on French draft legal acts reviewing, inter alia, the status of mutagenesis techniques used in vitro.

The Commission presented the information notified by the French government, summarised the mandate to EFSA and the letter to the Member States requesting information on the use of the in vitro random mutagenesis technique. Several Member States expressed serious concerns in relation to the French notifications and mentioned that they did not differentiate between in vitro and in vivo mutagenesis, thus have difficulties to follow the French definition and to specify varieties obtained by in vitro random mutagenesis. The Commission highlighted that

it is looking for information on research and development work on in vitro random mutagenesis, in particular on plant cells, not just varieties produced by this technique. The Member States will provide further information by the end of June as requested in the letter by the Commission.

A.05 Presentation by France of the final report on the organisation of a temporary experiment under Commission Implementing Decision 2012/340/EU as regards field inspection under official supervision for basic seed and bred seed of generations prior to basic seed.

Postponed.

A.06 Presentation by the Commission of a report on the implementation of Commission Decision 2004/842/EC on the placing on the market of seed of not yet listed varieties.

The Commission presented a detailed report of the use of the authorisations to market seed of not yet listed agricultural varieties, both as regards number of varieties and authorised amounts. The consistent frequent use of the system since its creation, also for vegetable varieties, was highlighted. Member States welcomed the report. It was requested to look into the possibility to compare the number of authorisations to the number of varieties registered in each Member State, and to indicate how many of the authorised varieties actually become listed varieties at the end of the variety testing period.

A.07 Update on the unique EU plant variety IT system.

The Commission presented the status and next steps of the reactivated common IT project with CPVO that will group different databases for plant varieties (Variety Finder, Common Catalogue, later Forematis and Frumatis) under the umbrella of one portal (1) for the submission of Member States' notifications on plant varieties and (2) for a database on EU plant varieties for marketing throughout the EU. The progress achieved along two main lines of intervention was described: i) the design of a new, improved version of the Common Catalogue and ii) the rationalisation of data flows across Commission, Member States and CPVO IT systems. The Commission announced a questionnaire which will be sent to the Member States to collect more information about the species names, footnotes and further technical information to be included in the notifications for the common catalogues and plant variety finder.

A.08 Update on the approach to seed fraud.

The Commission presented an update on the ongoing cases. Europol has confirmed that a seed fraud targeted action will be launched in the OPSON X framework. A short summary of the cases shared in 2019 will be published on the DG SANTE website, with the aim to promote the use of the network and to give an overview of the ongoing issues in an anonymous way. A request to the Member States on 2019 imports into the EU of seeds from non-equivalent countries will be launched in the coming weeks.

A.09 Update on technical matters in relation to EU equivalence requests.

The Commission informed the Member States on the update of the different requests for equivalence. The proposal concerning Ukraine has been submitted to the Council and European Parliament. The Council has no comments and in the European Parliament discussion is ongoing. The exact time line for adoption of the Decision is not clear yet. The proposal concerning Bolivia is in preparation. The process for India is ongoing and the audit report is being finalised and will become available on the DG SANTE website. The audit concludes that some changes to Indian seed regulations and their implementation are needed.

B.01 Exchange of views and possible technical opinion of the Committee on a draft Implementing Regulation amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 637/2009 on rules as to the suitability of the denominations of varieties of agricultural plant species and vegetable species.

The Commission presented the draft Regulation and explained the legal changes such as the revised structure, issues in relation to the article on denomination causing offence/public policy and editorial questions raised by the legal advisers of the Commission. The Commission is working on an amended draft, addressing the comments raised and will launch a written consultation in the coming weeks. Thereafter, the draft will be submitted to the written procedure to obtain the opinion of the Committee.

B.02 Exchange of views and possible technical opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Directive on the organisation of a temporary experiment under Council Directives 66/401/EEC, 66/402/EEC, 2002/54/EC and 2002/57/EC as regards as regards official control rate for field inspection under official supervision for basic seed, bred seed of generations prior to basic seed (pre-basic seed) and certified seed.

The Commission presented the draft. The Member States thanked the Commission for the fast development and welcomed the draft. The Member States are in favour to start the experiment as soon as possible. At the request of a Member State post-control results were added to the criteria for the risk assessment of the seed supplier. The Commission is planning to start the experiment either on 1 August 2020 or on 1 January 2021 depending on how fast the internal procedures can be managed. The draft will be submitted as soon as possible to the written procedure to obtain the opinion of the Committee

M.01 COVID-19

The Commission asked for experiences during the confinement and the potential effects on seed certification and movement. All Member States confirmed that the COVID-19 crises initially had some impact on the seed certification and the work of the authorities. There have sometimes been some delays, but in general no serious problems have been countered as seed was regarded as essential good.

M.02 Small packages on seed

A Member State raised the issue on the rules for the size and labeling of small packages. The Commission replied that this requires a legal analysis of the

empowerments in the marketing Directives. The Commission will reflect to put this topic on the agenda of the next meeting.

M.03 Farm to Fork (F2F) Strategy

A Member State asked for information about the potential impact of the F2F Strategy on organic and traditional varieties. The Commission informed the Member States that the F2F Strategy was adopted in May and will be presented in the next meeting of the Committee. Possible new approaches with regard to organic and traditional varieties will be addressed in the context of the study requested by the Council on the options to update the seeds legislation.

M.04 Not yet listed rootstock

A Member State raised the issue on the marketing of not yet listed varieties of vegetable rootstocks and proposed to include this type of material into Commission Decision 2004/842/EC. Some other Member States supported the proposal. The Commission will explore this issue.

M.05 Euroseed proposal on hybrid wheat

The Commission has received a request from Euroseed to start working on rules for hybrid wheat. It is proposed to reduce the varietal purity requirement for hybrid wheat from 90% to 85% in a temporary experiment taking into account new production techniques, along the lines that was done for hybrid barley. Euroseed will raise this issue also at the OECD Seed Schemes level.

The Commission will come back with technical information in the next meeting. One Member State informed that they already have a wheat hybrid variety in testing for registration.

M.06 Amendment of Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2072

A Member States enquired about plans to amend the Implementing Regulation in relation to the regulated non-quarantine pests. The Commission informed that the preparatory work for an amendment is on-going and that it will inform the Member States on the expected timeline of the process.