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Health and Food Safety Directorate General

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Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed
Section *Seeds and Propagating Material for Agriculture and Horticulture*
06 May 2021

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

SUMMARY REPORT

A.01 Exchange of views on a Commission working document on an amendment of the Annexes of Council Directive 66/402/EEC concerning temporary rules for hybrid wheat.

The Commission presented the draft document. The Member States generally supported this approach and agreed to lay down specific requirements for wheat hybrids for seven years starting 1 September 2022. France kindly accepted the lead to collect the necessary data during the period to have a basis for evaluating the requirements.

A.02 Update on the preparations of temporary rules for organic varieties.

The Commission informed the Member States about the progress on temporary rules for organic varieties. The Commission has received two proposals for carrot and kohlrabi and plans an expert meeting for the beginning of June to discuss the potential changes in the relevant DUS protocols for these two species. The participating experts of the Member States will be invited in due course and provided with the relevant documents. The Commission asked the Member States to provide proposals by 28 May 2021 in relation to adapted VCU requirements for organic varieties.

A.03 Information point on import-export issues between the EU and UK(GB).

Since 1 January 2021 Brexit has been completed. Northern Ireland will remain within the EU market. EU equivalence can be granted to Great Britain as to any other third country. Several Member States informed about unclear situations and procedures in relation to Great Britain, in particular regarding potatoes and vegetable seeds. The Commission clarified that import of seed potatoes from Great Britain into the EU is still not allowed due to non-alignment with the EU plant health requirements. Concerning vegetable seeds, the Commission did not propose any equivalence of certified seeds because no such equivalence has been granted to any third country, with the exception of Moldova. Moreover, Member States should treat the UK/GB standard vegetable seeds as they treat standard vegetable seeds from any other third country.

A.04 Exchange of views on a Commission working document on the inclusion of varieties of vegetable rootstocks into Commission Decision 2004/842/EC.

The Commission presented the draft document and the Member States welcomed the suggested text in general. The Commission asked for written comments by 28 May 2021 and will prepare an updated draft for the next meeting.

A.05 Exchange of views on blackleg requirements in the plant health and seed potato marketing legislation.

The Commission presented the requirements concerning blackleg on seed potato lots and on plants in the field in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072 and in Commission Directive 2002/56/EC, pointing out that the visual inspections of lots of seed potatoes do not allow identification of the species causing wet rots and that setting thresholds for symptoms caused specifically by *Dickeya* spp. or *Pectobacterium* spp. is very difficult. Member States were asked to send comments on the requirements by 28 May 2021.

A.06 Presentation by the Netherlands of a report on a temporary experiment under Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/547 as regards seed potato tubers derived from true potato seed.

The Netherlands presented the latest results and figures from the temporary experiment for seed potato tubers derived from true potato seed. The Member States welcomed the presentation and asked some questions for clarification. The Commission proposed to wait for the full annual report to be provided by the Netherlands and to discuss this topic in more detail during the next meeting.

A.07 Presentation by Germany of the final report on a temporary experiment under Commission Implementing Decision 2014/150/EU 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.

Postponed.

A.08 Presentation of EU legislation related to *Cannabis sativa* spp.

The Commission gave a presentation on the EU legislation related to hemp as regards seed, food including contaminants, pharmaceuticals, CAP and the International Drug Conventions. The derogation as laid down in the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (Article 28(2)) on cultivation of hemp exclusively for industrial (fibre and seed) and horticultural purposes needs further clarification. During the CAP trilogue the European Parliament has proposed to increase the THC limit from 0,2 to 0,3%.

A.09 Update on the unique EU plant variety IT system.

The Commission presented the progress on the plant variety IT system. The Commission informed about the species codification system, agreement on the data dictionary and different future data submission approaches. Some Member States asked for technical clarification regarding the implementation and updating of the information in the future plant variety IT portal.

A.10 Update on the approach to seed fraud.

Postponed.

B.01 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Directive amending Annex I to Council Directives 66/401/EEC on the marketing of fodder plant seed, 66/402/EEC on the marketing of cereal seed, 2002/54/EC on the marketing of beet seed, 2002/55/EC on the marketing of vegetable seed and 2002/57/EC on the marketing of seed of oil and fibre plants, as regards the use of bio-molecular techniques.

The Commission presented the document. Some Member States proposed to postpone the date of application to 1 September 2022. No objections were presented.

The Commission informed of its intention to launch the written procedure in accordance with Article 8 of the standard rules of procedure of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed to obtain the Committee's opinion.

Vote taken by written procedure: Favourable opinion

B.02 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision authorising Poland to prohibit the marketing on its territory of the hemp variety Finola pursuant to Council Directive 2002/53/EC.

The Commission presented the Decision to authorise Poland to prohibit a certain hemp variety because the content of THC exceeded 0,2% during the last two consecutive growing seasons. Poland informed the Commission that it will vote against this proposal as recently there has been an increased interest in hemp and it is against the CAP notification system on THC in hemp seed. Moreover, the CAP reform is under discussion with possible changes for the THC content. No other objections were presented.

The Commission informed of its intention to launch the written procedure in accordance with Article 8 of the standard rules of procedure of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed to obtain the Committee's opinion.

Vote taken by written procedure: Favourable opinion

M.01 AOB

One Member State enquired about the imports of commercial seed of fodder plants from UK into EU. The Commission informed that UK did not request for EU equivalence for this seed category.

One Member State asked for clarification in respect of plant passport when gene banks market seed in small quantities for hobby gardeners. The Commission answered that this issue should be addressed in the plant health committee meeting.

The delegate of Spain highlighted the importance of having interpretation for the Spanish language. The Commission reassured the Member States that it is the intention to move to the normal interpretation regime.

One Member State asked for information on the delegated act on organic heterogeneous material. The act will be adopted by the Commission on 7 May 2021, followed by a period of two months for the European Parliament and Council to comment. If there are no objections the act will be adopted and enter into force on 1 January 2022.