



COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION



Council conclusions on the future of agricultural promotion policy

*3137th AGRICULTURE and FISHERIES Council meeting
Brussels, 15 and 16 December 2011*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council of the European Union

1. **welcomes** the Green Paper of 14 July 2011 on promotion measures and information provision for agricultural products: a reinforced value-added European strategy for promoting the tastes of Europe, as well as the discussions at the informal meeting of Ministers for Agriculture and Fisheries of the European Union on 13 September 2011;
2. **acknowledges** the wide public consultation of all interested parties in 2011 and the Conference on "Promotion of European Agriculture – new approach" held in Warsaw on 29 November 2011;
3. **recalls** that promotion is an important tool in ensuring the competitiveness of EU farming and food processing, ensuring that the agri-food sector can make Europe and third countries aware of the characteristics of European products;
4. **notes** that existing EU promotion policy serves the basic objectives of EU interests, complementing the primary role of private industry in promoting its own products;
5. **recognises** that the positive effects of promotion policy should be further strengthened, while acknowledging at the same time that the system needs some improvements, clarification and simplification;
6. **concurs** with the Commission that the EU needs a more ambitious and cost-effective promotion policy, appropriate to its modern agricultural sector and consistent with other promotion instruments and policies;

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7. With regard to the EU budget, **considers** that the promotion policy should have financial resources which are commensurate with its objectives, without prejudice to the decisions on the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework post-2013;
8. **notes** that information and promotion actions should also be carried out to promote the potential of local farming and short-chain distribution which have an impact on the development of local entrepreneurship and the competitiveness of producers. At the same time, the national heritage would be protected and the whole production process would have a favourable impact on the environment; **notes** that this is already proposed in the future framework for rural development policy under CAP 2020;
9. **underlines** the necessity of having a policy targeted at EU added-value actions;
10. **recognises** the need for an attractive policy in line with the needs of European producers and organisations, especially with increased emphasis on third countries;
11. **notes** the importance of parallel diplomatic and trade policy activity to secure access to third country markets;
12. **acknowledges** the need to simplify and improve the current policy framework, including programming, monitoring and evaluation, in order to increase its effectiveness and reduce the administrative burden;
13. **recognises** the need to strengthen coherence and synergy between the horizontal promotion framework and other promotion actions available in the CAP in order to reinforce the EU agricultural promotion message;
14. **encourages** the Commission in its ongoing work to explore all possible ways of achieving the objectives described above, notably by:
 - a. strengthening the image of European food and promoting European food as healthy, safe, of high quality and produced with respect for the environment and animal welfare, and helping to open new markets or increase market shares for EU products, especially in third countries;
 - b. providing consumers with better access to information on the European production model and increasing their level of familiarity with quality systems, such as PDO, PGI and organic farming, and products made in compliance with those systems ;
 - c. making promotion policy responsive to crisis management;
 - d. improving and streamlining multi-country and multi-product programmes, particularly as an important tool in external markets;
 - e. focusing on building the capacities of European producers and organisations (e.g. facilitating participation in programmes, exchanges of best practice using different communication platforms, etc.);

- f. simplifying and shortening administrative procedures for the application, evaluation and implementation of programmes and revisiting all operational rules to achieve greater effectiveness;
 - g. reviewing the respective responsibilities of the Commission and the Member States."
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