



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HEALTH & CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

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**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
“SEEDS AND PROPAGATING MATERIAL FOR AGRICULTURE, HORTICULTURE AND FORESTRY”  
HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2008**

Chairman: Mr. B. Foletto, Mr W. De Backer item 3

All Member States (MS) were present except Latvia and Malta. Latvia was represented by Estonia and Malta was represented by United Kingdom.  
The CPVO and Norway participated as observers.

**1. Discussion on conservation varieties**

The Commission Services informed the Member States that the conservation varieties dossier is in progress.

**2. Discussion on the Working Programme 2009**

The Commission Services circulated the Unit Management Plan for the year 2009 in the area of Seeds and Propagating Material for Agriculture, Horticulture and Forestry. The MS's experts expressed their agreement and recommended four main priorities:

1) completion of the dossiers concerning the "genetic resources", 2) updating of the nomenclature of the species, 3) updating of the technical conditions with reference to the international standards and 4) simplification of the current standards to be satisfied by seed. Regarding the other items, the following were mentioned as urgent/important:

- (a) to resume the Community comparative trials and tests;
- (b) to improve the electronic accessibility to the Common Catalogues of Agricultural and Vegetable Species and Vine and the Community List of Forest reproductive Material;
- (c) to adopt implementing measures for Article 13 of Directive 1999/105/EC as regards the supplier's document.

In addition, the experts proposed:

- (d) a possible establishment of temporary experiments as regards the examination under official supervision of field inspection for pre-basic and basic seed and the marketing of "seed in bulk" for seed potatoes;

- (e) to adopt rules for the marketing of seed potatoes as regards "in vitro propagation" and mini tubers;
- (f) to review the conditions set out by Decision 2004/842/EC as regards the placing on the market of seed belonging to varieties for which an application for entry in the national catalogue has been submitted, in particular, as regards asparagus.

### **3. Information about the progress of the evaluation**

The final report has been submitted to the Commission and has been accepted by DG SANCO. The texts of the report, its annexes and its executive summary have been published on SANCO's website. A brief presentation of the results of the evaluation has been made to the Council on 4 December. This presentation (in power-point) will be placed on CIRCA, together with the direct hyperlink to the evaluation web-pages.

A stakeholder conference on the results of the evaluation will be organised on 18 March 2009. By June 2009, the action plan for the review of the legislation on the marketing of seed and propagating material should be ready for adoption by the SANCO management. The target timing for a Commission proposal for a revised legislation is set at the end of 2010.

### **4. Discussion and possible opinion on a draft Commission Decision on the organisation of a temporary experiment providing for certain derogations for the marketing of seed mixtures intended for use as fodder plants pursuant to the second indent of article 13(1) of Council Directive 66/401/EEC of 14 June 1966 on the marketing of fodder plant seed (doc. SANCO/3842/07)**

After discussion, the MS's experts pointed out that the authorisation for this experiment aiming to amend the legislation by comitology, is without prejudice to other decisions to be taken to organise experiments to collect information for possible future amendments of legislation on the marketing of seed and propagating material. Some delegations regretted that the aim of the experiment is limited to considering Article 2 of Directive 66/401/EEC.

The DK delegation supported its abstention with the following declaration:

- "1. We regret that the aim of the experiment, as stated in Article 1, is limited to considering Article 2 of the Council Directive 66/401/EEC, and does not take into consideration i.e. Article 13.
2. We regret that the sampling of these seed mixtures, as stated in Annex II, (2)(a), cannot be carried out by both official and authorised samplers, bearing in mind that the Council Directive 66/401/EEC has recognised this possibility in relation to certification since 2002."

**Vote: favourable opinion by qualified majority.**

### **5. Discussion and possible opinion on a draft Commission Decision authorising Member States to take decisions under Council Directive 1999/105/EC on assurances afforded in respect of forest reproductive material produced in third countries (doc. SANCO/3658/08)**

The importation of forest reproductive material from third countries which recognise an international scheme for certification of forest reproductive material is regulated by a Council Decision. However, for certain other third countries the information presently available at the Community level is not sufficient to include those third countries in that Decision. In order to

satisfy the request for some specific forest material produced in those countries, Member States should be authorised to take decisions on whether this material imported from them offers equivalent guarantees to those applicable to forest reproductive material produced in the Community in accordance with Directive 1999/105/EC.

**Vote: favourable opinion by unanimity.**

**6. Discussion and possible approval of the final report of the Community comparative tests and trials on *Asparagus*.**

Member States noted that the requested follow-up was done appropriately. The report was adopted.

**6a. Discussion and possible opinion on a Commission Directive limiting the marketing of seed of certain species of fodder plants and oil and fibre plants to seed which has been officially certified as ‘basic seed’ or ‘certified seed’ (Codified version) (doc. 1986L0109)**

Directive 75/502/EEC limiting the marketing of seed of certain species of fodder plants and oil and fibre plants to seed which has been officially certified as ‘basic seed’ or ‘certified seed’ was amended several times. Based on the principle of simplification the Commission services proposed to adopt a codified version of this Directive including all amendments.

**Vote: favourable opinion by unanimity.**

**7. Miscellaneous**

**7.1 2<sup>nd</sup> World Seed Conference**

DK provided information about the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Seed Conference, jointly organised by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Seed Federation (ISF), the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) and the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) planned for 8-10 September 2009.

**7.2 Thresholds for the adventitious presence of GMOs**

ES asked information about the possible establishment of thresholds for the adventitious presence of GMOs in seed/propagating material of conventional varieties.

**7.3 CZ Presidency, planning of activities.**

The Czech delegate provided information about the planning of the Council Working Party as regards items concerning the marketing of seed and propagating material.

**7.4 Directives 92/33/EEC on the marketing of vegetable propagating and planting material other than seed and 2002/55/EC on the marketing of seed of vegetables. Listing on the Common Catalogue of varieties of rootstocks of vegetable propagating material.**

MSs are invited to provide the relevant information.

**7.5 Updating of the nomenclature of the species, updating of the technical conditions with reference to the international standards with the exception of seed potatoes and simplification of the current standards.**

The Commission Services informed that the draft amending the legislation is in the final pipeline. Comments to the draft to be circulated by 12 January 2009 should be submitted to the Commission by 13 February 2009.

**7.6 Decision 2004/842/EC concerning implementing rules for the placing on the market of seed belonging to varieties for which an application for entry in the national catalogue of varieties of agricultural plant species or vegetable species has been submitted.**

To facilitate the procedure of notifications, the Commission services invited Member States to submit the relevant information as regards the maximum quantity of seed of agricultural species marketed per year in their territory.

Bruno Foletto

N.B.: The measures on which the Committee has given an opinion are subject to the appropriate procedure for final approval by the Commission.