



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 31 January 2011**

Chairperson: Ms Päivi Mannerkorpi

All the Member States were present. Community Plant Variety Office, Norway and EFTA surveillance authority participated as observers.

1. Discussion on the quality requirements for rice.

The Portuguese delegate gave an update on the work to improve the quality requirements for rice as regards *Fusarium fujikuroi* and red grain. The participating Member State experts had analysed further data and an exchange of views took place. The Portuguese delegation will prepare a draft proposal for the working group with the aim of having a text for discussion in the next Standing Committee meeting.

2. Update on the Seeds and Propagating Material (S & PM) review.

The Commission informed that the public consultation on the 'option and analysis paper' for the impact assessment of the S&PM review should be launched on the Directorate General for Health and Consumers' website as soon as possible. The S&PM review has been included in a legislative package comprising three other legislative proposals (animal health, official feed and food control Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 and plant health). Therefore, the deadline for the adoption of the legal proposal by the Commission is now moved to June 2012.

3. Presentation by the Commission on the latest developments regarding delegated and implementing acts.

The Commission services made a presentation on the comitology measures post Lisbon: delegated and implementing measures. The main aspects of the procedures that will apply to these two types of acts were outlined. Particular emphasis has been given to the adoption and entry into force on 1 March 2011 of a Regulation laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers, which will replace Council Decision 1999/468/EC ('Comitology Decision'). As of 1 March 2011 and until the new legislation on seed and plant propagating material enters into force through the 'ordinary legislative procedure' ('ex-codecision'), any references to the management and regulatory procedures must be read as references to this new 'examination' procedure.

4. Discussion on the varietal purity requirements for spring oil seed rape.

The European Seed Association had made a request to decrease the current varietal purity requirement for spring oil seed rape hybrids from 90 % to 85 %. Some Member States had made initial studies and expressed their concerns about the possible increase in glucosinolate contents. The decision was taken not to pursue this request further.

5. Information on the situation of the official seed laboratories in Denmark.

The delegate from Denmark informed about the planned arrangements following the governmental decision to close down the official seed laboratories in order to spare costs. The Danish authorities will apply official supervision which includes auditing of seed companies and their laboratories. In order to carry out official check testing in seed, Danish authorities will use the official laboratories of other EU or EEA countries.

6. Information on issues related to forest reproductive material.

The Commission informed that a meeting with Member States' experts is planned for 21 February 2011. Application of implementing measures foreseen by Directive 1999/105/EC, in particular, Article 11 "Community list" Article 14 "supplier's document" and Article 17 "marketing prohibitions" will be discussed.

7. Discussion and possible opinion on a draft Commission Decision on conditions for the Member States to authorise their own producers to place on the market small packages of mixtures of standard seed of different vegetable varieties belonging to a same species. (Doc. SANCO/13197/2010).

The Commission presented the proposal. A discussion on the labelling requirements and on the controls of the implementation in the Member States took place. Further to this discussion two small changes to the text were made: The reference to the "use before date" was reworded and the label should include the wording "mixtures of varieties of [name of the species]" to improve clarity. Also a provision on a reporting obligation for Member States was included.

Vote: Unanimous in favour.

8. Miscellaneous

- The Netherlands presented its request for derogation according to Article 17 of Council Directive 66/402/EC on cereals to authorise the marketing of 1000 tonnes of commercial seed of spring wheat. Due to very wet weather conditions a significant part of the intended acreage of winter wheat could not be sown. Therefore, spring wheat is needed for this acreage and there are supply difficulties of certified seed. The spring sowing season starts in February-March. The Member States will report before 4 February 2011 whether certified seed of spring wheat will be available.
- Italy informed about an upcoming meeting of United Nations – Economic Committee for Europe on seed potato standards on 14-16 March 2011 in Geneva.

- Sweden asked for information about the revision of the annexes of the Seed Potato Directive. The Commission explained that so far only a limited number of Member States had sent in their comments to the report of the working group of Member State experts, for which the deadline had been set at 31 January 2011. Some stakeholders had also asked for more time to transmit their position. The deadline for all replies has been moved to 15 February 2011 so as to allow the Commission Services to summarise the comments received in view of a discussion in the next Standing Committee meeting. One outcome seems to be already clear; the number of field generations will be limited to nine as a maximum. As one of the Member States indicated, there is a clear wish by the industry to develop EU wide harmonised denominations and associated thresholds for seed potatoes.
- The Hungarian delegates informed about the meetings under the Hungarian Presidency: 22 March 2011 Council Working Party for UPOV co-ordination and 27 April 2011 Council Working Party for OECD co-ordination. The Danish delegate informed that she will be stepping down from her position as Bureau member of the OECD Seed Schemes in 2012. In view of geographical balance, there is a need to have an EU candidate for the position. The Hungarian Presidency informed that it will seek to coordinate for a candidate from the Member States of the EU and asked interested Member States to contact the Presidency.