

**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
“SEEDS AND PROPAGATING MATERIAL FOR AGRICULTURE, HORTICULTURE AND
FORESTRY” HELD ON 9 MARCH 2006**

Chairman: Mr. Flueh for the items 4 and 5 and Mr. Valvassori for the items 1, 2, 3 and 6.

All Member States were present. At the time of the vote on item 3, Luxemburg was represented by Belgium.

Bulgaria, Romania, Norway and CPVO participated as observers.

1. REVISION OF THE BOTANICAL NAMES OF THE VEGETABLE PLANTS

SANCO E.1 presented a working paper based on a work carried out by H.A. Jensen (DK) on a possible updating of the scientific nomenclature of the vegetable plants.

The intention of the Commission to update Council Directives 2002/55/EC (former 70/458/EEC) and 92/33/EEC was noted.

Without prejudice to some specific suggestions, the Committee supported the approach.

On this occasion HU proposed extending the scope of the Community legislation to cover popcorn/sweet maize.

2. POSSIBLE REVISION ON THE MAXIMUM WEIGHT FOR SEED LOTS OF CERTAIN CEREALS

The Committee noted that, following the amendments of the OECD schemes for the varietal certification of seed moving in international trade and the revision of ISTA international rules for seed testing, the Commission is working on a possible revision on the maximum weight for seed lots of certain cereals.

The species concerned are *Avena sativa*, *Hordeum vulgare*, *Triticum aestivum*, *Triticum durum*, *Triticum spelta*, *Secale cereale*, *X Triticosecale* and *Oryza sativa*. The increase is from 25 tons to 30 tons.

The Committee supported the initiative. Some Member States underlined the urgency of the measure.

On this occasion the Committee noted a request from the European Seed Association (ESA) to extend a possible increased seed lot size also to pulses (peas and beans).

3. DRAFT COMMISSION DIRECTIVE LAYING DOWN SPECIAL CONDITIONS CONCERNING THE PRESENCE OF *AVENA SATIVA* IN CEREAL SEED

The text of the codification, as prepared by the Commission (Legal Service), of Commission Directive 74/268/EEC as amended was submitted to the Committee for opinion.

Voting: favourable opinion by unanimity.

4. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE OPINION ON A DRAFT COMMISSION DECISION AUTHORISING THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF CERTAIN VARIETIES OF MAIZE LISTED IN THE COMMON CATALOGUE OF VARIETIES OF AGRICULTURAL PLANT SPECIES, PURSUANT TO DIRECTIVE 2002/53/EC

The draft Commission Decision was presented to the Committee.

On 24 June 2005 the Polish authorities asked the Commission to be authorised, on the basis of Article 16(2)(b) of Directive 2002/53/EC, to prohibit the use and placing on the market of seed material from varieties of maize which are not suitable for cultivation in Poland. A list of the varieties not suitable for cultivation in Poland was sent by Poland on 9 December 2005 and complemented on 9 January 2006.

From the information available for the varieties concerned, it is well known that they are not suitable for cultivation in any part of Poland, because of their too high maturity class. The request made by Poland could not cover the varieties accepted in the Common catalogue before 1 January 2003, according to Article 16(2)(b).

Some modifications of the annex were presented and agreed upon.

A discussion took place. It was noted that Member States have made extensive use of the provision of this article in the past. Some Member States suggested discussing a possible revision of this article in the framework of the ongoing discussions on 'Better Regulation/Simplification of seed legislation'.

The draft Decision was submitted for opinion to the Committee, which delivered a favourable opinion by unanimity.

5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE OPINION ON A DRAFT COMMISSION DECISION AUTHORISING THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF SIXTEEN GENETICALLY MODIFIED VARIETIES OF MAIZE WITH THE GENETIC MODIFICATION MON 810 LISTED IN THE COMMON CATALOGUE OF VARIETIES OF AGRICULTURAL PLANT SPECIES, PURSUANT TO DIRECTIVE 2002/53/EC

The draft Commission Decision was presented to the Committee.

On 31 March 2005 the Polish authorities asked the Commission to be authorised, on the basis of Article 16(2) of Directive 2002/53/EC, to prohibit the use and placing on the market of seed material from seventeen genetically modified varieties of maize line MON 810. A modified request was sent on 24 June 2005, specifying that it was based on Article 16(2)(b). On 9 December 2005, Poland informed the Commission that the request does not apply to the variety Novelis mentioned in the initial request.

From the information available for the varieties concerned, it is well known that they are not suitable for cultivation in any part of Poland, because of their too high maturity class which are at least of 350 FAO index or equivalent maturity class.

A discussion took place. It was explained that as the requests concerning genetically modified varieties and non-genetically modified varieties are governed by different procedures, separate Decisions have been drafted.

The draft Decision was submitted for opinion to the Committee, which delivered a favourable opinion by unanimity.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

The Committee noted:

- a) Work in progress on the collection of “the contact points” in order to implement Commission Regulation (EC) No 217/2006 laying down rules as regards “less stringent requirements” in respect of the minimum germination.
- b) Information on the developments by the Commission services of “the specific conditions under which seed and propagating material of agricultural and vegetable species may be marketed in relation to the conservation *in situ* and the sustainable use of plant genetic resources”.
- c) The wish expressed by various Delegations to include the Standing Committee in discussions currently on the agenda of the meeting of the CPVO Council of Administration on the possible extension of the role and activities of the CPVO in seed and plant propagating material marketing sector.
- d) At the request of one Member State, insisting on the necessity to establish the thresholds for the adventitious presence of genetically modified seeds in non-GM seeds, the Committee was informed of the publication of the study on co-existence carried out by the Joint Research Centre and was recalled that any Decision would first take place in the framework of Directive 2001/18/EC.
- e) A suggestion (PT) to reconsider the current classification of varieties of oats, to take into account the status of *Avena strigosa*.
- f) A suggestion (NL) to ensure a better link between CAP payments and the Common Catalogue of Varieties regarding the THC tetrahydrocannabinol content in hemp.
- g) A request (DK) to attribute priority to the implementation of the ISTA/ISF experiment on herbage seed lot size. The relevant OECD proposal has been submitted to Delegations and National Designated Authorities for agreement and comments by 29 March 2006.
- h) The documents related to meeting 20/22 March 2006 of the Specialized Session on Standardization of Seed Potatoes of the UNECE, including the outcome of the meeting of EU Council Working Party of 21 February 2006.
- i) The results of discussions (TAIEX meeting of 25 January 2006) with BG and RO on issues related to the registration of varieties of agricultural and vegetable plant species, in view of the inclusion in the Common Catalogues.

Michael Flueh
Head of Unit

List of participants to be joined to the Summary Report

Standing Committee on Seeds and Propagating Material for Agriculture, Horticulture and Forestry

Date 9 March 2006

Member State	Ministry or organism	Number of participants
BE	Ministère de la Région Wallonne	1
	Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap	1
CZ	Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture (ÚKZÚZ)	1
DK	Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries - Plandirektoratet	1
DE	Bundessortenamt	1
EE	Ministry of Agriculture	1
EL	Ministry of Rural Development and Food	1
ES	Ministerio de Agricultura Pesca y Alimentacion	2
FR	Ministère de l'agriculture et de la pêche	1
	GNIS	1
	Ministère de l'économie des finances et de l'industrie	1
IE	Department of Agriculture and Food	1
IT	ENSE	1
CY	Department of Agriculture	1
LV	Ministry of Agriculture	1
LT	Ministry of Agriculture	1
LU	Ministère de l'Agriculture Adm. Des Serv. Techniques de l'Agriculture	1
HU	National Institute for Agricultural Quality Control	1
MT	Ministry for Rural Affairs and Environment	1
NL	Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food quality	1

	Naktuinbouw	1
AT	AGES	1
PL	Ministère de l'Agriculture	1
	Polish Permanent Representation	1
PT	Ministerio de Agricultura	1
SI	Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry	1
SK	Central Institute for Testing in Agriculture (UKSUP)	2
FI	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	1
SE	Swedish National Board of Agriculture	1
UK	DEFRA	1
NO	Norwegian Food Safety Institute	1
BG	Executive Agency for Variety Testing and Seed Control	1
RO	National Inspection for Quality of Seeds	1
CPVO	Community Plant Variety Office	1
COM	European Commission	4