



Short report of the 127th meeting of the Regulatory Committee on Organic Production of 29-30 September 2015

President: Diego CANGA FANO

28 Member States were present. Norway and Switzerland were present as observers.

Section A – Opinion of the Committee

- 1. Commission Decision approving on behalf of the European Union the amendment of appendices 1 and 2 to Annex 9 to the Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on trade in agricultural products**

The document presented by the Commission received a favourable opinion from the Committee by unanimity (**28 Member States in favour**).

Section B – Points for information and/or discussion

- 1. Draft Commission Implementing Regulation [...]amending Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008 laying down detailed rules for implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 as regards an electronic certificate of inspection**

The text was not ready yet. It will be distributed and discussed in the next meeting.

- 2. Draft Commission Implementing Regulation [...]amending Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008 laying down detailed rules for implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 as regards the arrangements for imports of organic products from third countries**

The Commission presented a working document with the current updates it intends to make on Annexes III and IV of Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008.

3. Draft Commission Implementing Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 as regards substances: Annex II, VI & VIII

The Commission presented and explained in detail the changes compare to the previous document, which took into account all the comments submitted on time since the RCOP meeting of 16 & 17 July 2015. Several delegations requested clarifications on Annex II as regards basic substances, plant oils, kielselgur and ethylene. In Annex VI the concerns raised were about the group of vitamins and provitamines and finally, in Annex VIII, the questions were about the organic origin of some of the substances and the possible negative consequences of wider uses of sodium hydroxide. The Commission asked the delegates of the Member States to send their comments within 15 days after the meeting. Discussions will be resumed in the next RCOP.

1. Pesticide residues testing in organic production [postponed]

2. Reporting and notifications under organic production legislation

The Commission introduced the new functionality in OFIS allowing Member States to amend/update the list of Control Bodies and Authorities anytime during the year.

3. Update on notification of EU irregularities

The Commission presented statistical information on EU irregularities notified from 2012 to 2015, broken down by the Member States (notifying and notified) and by irregularity type.

The Commission provided an overview of notifications between 22/6 and 25/8/2015. As regards the timeliness of notifications, whilst overall progress was noted there is room for improvement, particularly at the level of operators and control bodies.

Individual cases discussed

- INEU 92/2015, 91/2015 and 100/2015 (rapeseed from Poland)
- 16/2015 (OFIS EU 1518) (sesame seed from the Netherlands), for which the Commission provided its opinion on residue "action" levels.

4. Update on notification of irregularities concerning imported products

1. Overview of notifications as per 01/09/2015

55 new cases were notified between 15/06/2015 and 01/09/2015.

For cases notified before 31 March 2015, the overview table only shows the open cases.

2. Cases for presentation by the notifying Member State / Switzerland and discussion

- a. 114/2015 - NL – bulgur from Turkey
- b. 92/2015 - CH – lentils from Canada

c. 85/2015 - ES – quinoa from Bolivia

5. EGTOP

The Commission updated the delegates on the EGTOP's current works and asked for ideas for next year's planning, as the backlog of substances to evaluate has been eliminated. Comments are to be sent in 15 days at the latest.

6. Import regime (Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008)

- a) Overview on third countries
- b) US: the Commission briefed on the videoconference held on 15 September 2015.
- c) Canada: on-the-spot visit from 26 to 30 October 2015

The Commission gave updated information about the upcoming on-the-spot visit to Canada.

7. Miscellaneous¹

- a) Electronic certification – state of play and next steps

The Commission provided a comprehensive presentation covering:

- The new functionalities and improvements in TRACES;
 - Feedback from the first round of technical workshops with national experts held on 28 and 29 September;
 - Preliminary replies to the comments and requests for clarification by MS on the aspects to amend in Regulation No 1235/2008 for the introduction and the proper functioning of the electronic certification of imports;
 - The link of the customs IT system with TRACES
 - Electronic signature
- b) Feedback by Member States on reporting of operators under annual data collection by EUROSTAT and annual reports in OFIS

The Commission thanked delegates for the feedback received, which provides a rather comprehensive overview of the reporting practice in Member States. The point will be in the agenda of next RCOP meeting.

¹ Any subjects that the Member States wish to discuss under Point 'Miscellaneous' need to be submitted to the Commission and the other Member States at the latest one week before the meeting of the Standing Committee on Organic Farming.

c) FR – Organic Juveniles

Many Member States asked for the possibility for Competent Authorities to authorise the use of non-organic juveniles when suitable organic juveniles are not available. The Commission presented a draft new paragraph in article 47 of Regulation 889/2008, which will allow the granting of exemptions for catastrophic circumstances, but indicated that it did not consider that a further extension of this flexibility would be needed. One Member State also argued against a further prolongation of derogations, arguing that this would penalise operators that have invested to ensure compliance with EU rules. This issue will be discussed again at the next RCOP meeting.

d) Sweden – Pullets/Poultry

SE asked to be informed when the Commission intends to start discussions on poultry rules, including on pullets and poultry for meat production. The Commission recalled that detailed rules on poultry are currently being discussed on the framework of the review of the organic production legislation.

Diego CANGA FANO

Annex: List of participants

List of participants

Regulatory Committee on Organic Production of 29-30 September 2015

Country	Organisation	Participants
BE	SERVICE PUBLIC DE WALLONIE – DG AGRICULTURE, RESSOURCES NATURELLES & ENVIRONNEMENT – DIRECTION DE LA QUALITE	2
	VLAAMSE OVERHEID, AFDELING DUURZAME LANDBOUWONTWIKKELING	
BG	PERMANENT REPRESENTATION	1
CZ	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OF CZECH REPUBLIC	2
	PERMANENT REPRESENTATION	
DK	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FOOD	2
DE	LANDESAMT FÜR NATUR, UMWELT UND VERBRAUCHERSCHUTZ NORDRHEIN-WESTFALEN	3
	BUNDESANSTALT FÜR LANDWIRTSCHAFT UND ERNÄHRUNG – BLE	
	BUNDESMINISTERIUM FÜR ERNÄHRUNG LANDWIRTSCHAFT UND VERBRAUCHERSCHUTZ - BMELV	
EE	MINISTRY OF RURAL AFFAIRS	1
IE	DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND THE MARINE	1
EL	PERMANENT REPRESENTATION	1
ES	MINISTERIO DE AGRICULTURA, ALIMENTACIÓN Y MEDIO AMBIENTE – SUBDIR. GEN. DE CALIDAD DIFERENCIADA Y AGRICULTURA ECOLÓGICA	1
FR	MINISTÈRE DE L'AGRICULTURE, DE L'AGROALIMENTAIRE ET DE LA FORÊT	2
	INAO	
CR	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE	1
IT	MINISTERO DELLE POLITICHE AGRICOLE ALIMENTARI E FORESTALI – UFFICIO PQAL1 – AGRICOLTURA BIOLOGICA	2
CY	PERMANENT REPRESENTATION	1
LV	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE	1
LT	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE	1
LU	MINISTÈRE DE L'AGRICULTURE, DE LA VITICULTURE ET DE LA PROTECTION DES CONSOMMATEURS	1
HU	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE – DEPARTMENT OF FOOD CHAIN CONTROL	1
MT	MINISTRY OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ...	1
NL	MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS	2
AT	PERMANENT REPRESENTATION	1
PL	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT	3

Country	Organisation	Participants
PT	DIREÇÃO-GERAL DE AGRICULTURA E DESENVOLVIMENTO RURAL	2
RO	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT	1
SI	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FOOD	1
SK	CCTIA CENTRAL CONTROL AND TESTING INSTITUTE IN AGRICULTURE	1
FI	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY	1
SE	SWEDISH BOARD OF AGRICULTURE	2
	NATIONAL FOOD AGENCY – FOOD STANDARDS DEPARTMENT	
UK	DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS (DEFRA)	2
EFTA	-	-
IS	-	-
NO	NORWEGIAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY	2
	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD	
CH	FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, EDUCATION AND RESEARCH EAER	2