

REPLY TO THE APPEAL OF THE POLISH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PRODUCERS

In the recent weeks, the Commission has received a number of appeals in which Polish producers of fruit and vegetables voice their opposition to the provisions of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 302/2012 on producer groups in fruit and vegetables Sector ⁽¹⁾.

In reply to these appeals, I would like to underline that for reasons of budgetary discipline and in order to optimise the allocation of financial resources in a sustainable and effective way, a limitation of expenditure on Producer Groups was deemed necessary when the amount of support, which at the time of the 2007 reform of the Fruit and Vegetables sector had been forecast at around of 30-40 mio € per year, reached 115mio € for 2010; 195 Mio € for 2011 (of which 174 mio € or 89% for Poland only) and could even reach around 400 mio € for 2012, according to the latest forecasts by Member States in April.

The annual ceiling for the aid to producer groups of 10 million € introduced by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 302/2012 does not apply to effectively ongoing recognition plans where the investments have already started and the Producer Group has entered into legally binding agreements with third parties, thus protecting the legitimate expectations of beneficiaries.

(1) OJ L 99,5.4.2012, p. 21