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MINUTES

Joint meeting

170th MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR THE COMMON ORGANISATION OF AGRICULTURAL MARKETS AND THE ADVISORY GROUP ON "FRUIT AND VEGETABLES" 26 February 2010

President: Lars Hoelgaard

1. Fruit and vegetables: School Fruit Scheme (SFS)

1.1. Update on the Commission activities

- Update on various ongoing procedures by E.Jacquin Head of Unit C2. These are: the creation of two new groups, the SFS stakeholders' and scientific experts' group both aiming to assist the Commission and create a network of information and expertise to be shared. This is the first meeting of the SFS Stakeholders Group, in the form of a Management Committee jointly with the Advisory Group for Fruit and Vegetables. Six external experts were also present. The Commission also informed the participants about the forthcoming activation of the SFS web platform and the derogation of deadlines set by regulation 288/2009 to be published by the last week of March 2010.
- Promotion of the F&V consumption in school children across Europe: PRO GREENS project by C.Lynch Karolinska Institute, Sweden. Swedish 3-year project, financed by DG SANCO. Nine countries are participating and the aim of this program is to impede the decreasing fruits and vegetables (F&V) consumption and ultimately raise both F&V intake and awareness on impact on health. The target group is 11-year old children and their parents.

1.2. The national strategies for 2010/2011

- SFS in Hungary by Z.Hajdu Director Agricultural and Rural Development Agency. The particularity of the Hungarian scheme consists in the fact that only apples (ready to eat) are distributed in schools, nevertheless it appears to be quite effective (70% of the pupils and 50% of the schools from all over the country). More products both fresh and processed will eventually be included. Improve the flexibility of the implementation and reduce the administrative burden are two of the main concerns.
- SFS in Cyprus by A.Mazeris and Ch.Constantinou Department of Agriculture. The SFS has been launched in October 2009 and involves children from two districts. F&V are distributed twice per week, the products are sterilized and individually packed ready for

consumption as in Cyprus meals are not given in schools and thus there are no infrastructures in order to preserve and handle F&V. In Cyprus the implementation is smooth and no major difficulties have been mentioned so far.

- SFS in Slovenia by T.Polak Benkic ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food. In Slovenia 75% of the target group already participates (extended group 6-15 years old), F&V are distributed once per week. Local F&V suppliers and producers are recommended by authorities but the supply is not sufficient. The organisation of distribution is decentralised and quite flexible as schools are free to choose suppliers, ways of distribution, poster and accompanying measures.

1.3 Possible improvements of the Scheme in terms of simplification

- Regulatory framework and state of play in DE by H.Huckert BMELV. In 2009/2010 twelve Länder submitted their SFS regional strategies, yet only six participate. For 2010/2011 one more Land joined. Each Land is responsible for the implementation and funding of the program and a legal basis had to be established before implementing the scheme. The role of the federal government is purely coordinating (among Länder and the Commission). Difficulties occurred in: controlling procedures, lack of staff in schools and cofinancing. In several Länder the role of the media has been critical in terms of speculations. Some proposals for improvement would be: the fixed portion price (in line with EU Regulation), further rules simplification (related to distribution, filling in of applications for aid and the obligatory delivery proof), to allow teachers to eat the fruit and to simplify annual reporting and evaluation obligations.

- Possible simplification of the SFS by F.Klotz Ministerium für Ernährung und ländlichen Raum, Baden-Württemberg. This Land participates since February 2010 and 800.000 children are concerned. Main difficulties have been: cofinancing (the scheme is financed by municipalities, schools, parents and sponsors and not by the Land), heavy bureaucratic procedures, criticism related to the delegation and separation of competences between the EU, the federal state and the Land. Some propositions for improvement are: teachers should also be allowed to eat the fruits, the proof of cofinancing by private third parties should be replaced by a standard rate per portion and the evaluation exercise should to be done on the basis of few concrete and focused questions.

1.4 Models of distribution: from producers to schools

- SFS models of distribution, PO point of view, by Ph.Appeltans VBT Belgium. The sector in Flanders is quite enthusiastic about the SFS, their previous experience on Tutti Frutti has been used as the basis to extend the SFS in the region. Nevertheless, they have to deal with some difficulties. This presentation focuses on how problems such as logistics and high costs, the choice of the products, the limited budget and the conciliation of different programs, regulations and stakeholders, could be solved.

- The experience of the Comunidad de Valencia by P.Coscolla, Anecoop, Spain. This program started in November 2009, all the schools in Valencia participate (305.295 children between 6-11 years old), and only mandarins are distributed to the kids. The accompanying measures form a fundamental part of the program. These are educational animations and games, different types of promotion and communication material and merchandise, visits, information sessions for parents, participation of local TV channel and athletes. The introduction and implementation are quite successful and eased by the

motivation of the local government, schools' administration, teachers, parents and local community. Two more campaigns aiming the raise of F&V consumption are elaborated. Logistics high costs remain a problem to be solved.

- SFS, Implementation, Practicalities & Challenges by V.Dolan, Total Produce, UK. This presentation focuses on the role of the industry and supply channels. Logistics and questions linked to produce (selection, food safety, preparation, storage, packing etc) are the main concerns of the fresh produce sector. Yet, for these questions the best solution would be the creation of a network for exchange and diffusion of best practices and informal communication between the member States. It is also very important to raise the flexibility in assessing proposals, remove practical obstacles and favour synergies.

1.5 The communication tools: the School Fruit Scheme stakeholders' website and the EU Campaign "The Tasty Bunch"

- SFS web platform by V.Gallego, Tipik, Belgium. The SFS stakeholders' platform will probably be ready by the end of April. It's a public platform open to stakeholders, Member States, public, third countries and ultimately to all those interested in the SFS. The main objective of this platform is the exchange of information, knowledge, expertise and ideas all linked to the SFS.

- Tasty Bunch by V.Petrova K1, DG AGRI. The Tasty Bunch is an information campaign launched on 28 September 2009 aiming to raise awareness on both the School schemes (milk and school fruit) funded under the CAP budget. The approach is to communicate and explain the benefits of a balanced diet. In order to go closer to children, the information campaign went directly to the schools. The road show busses visited 173 schools across Europe (BE, F, the UK, IE, EE, LT and PL). Approximately 17.000 kids took part in the road shows which ran until the end of November. Activities, games and quizzes were aimed at the 8-12 age groups. The feedback has been very positive with schools claiming that the event was interesting, instructive and interactive.

1.6 The stakeholders' involvement (the role of parents and teachers, the accompanying measures)

- The experience of schools in Flanders - Tutti Frutti by L.Neven Flemish Institute for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Belgium. The program in Flanders is highly decentralised, F&V are distributed once per week and the target group consists of 3-12 years old children. The information and also the involvement of the parents is a crucial element of the program, therefore a contribution is requested but remains low so that all parents can participate. The added value from the SFS consists in raising the available money directly paid to schools. Efforts are needed to diminish the paper work and heavy administration.

- The accompanying measures (AM) by R.Pederson, EAHC. These measures should guarantee the effectiveness of the scheme in terms of long term impact on children's dietary habits and F&V consumption on a sustained basis. R.Pederson gave some examples of AM such as rewards, tasting, nutrition education, gardening in schools, visits to orchards, supermarket visits, involvement of parents and suggested that a common performance indicator describing and evaluating the AM could be also useful. Member States should be able to choose best practices on the basis of peer reviews and focus on the impact of the AM for the evaluation. Additionally, the Commission should

facilitate the share of best practices, draft an expert committee review on AM, and provide advice to MS on how the indicators should be developed to measure the effectiveness of the AM.

- The accompanying measures of Interfel by J.-H. Tanvez, Interfel France. This inter-branch organisation participated actively in the conception of the national French strategy for the SFS. Interfel's 25 dieticians have been involved in advising on the demand of the local authorities. Several examples of AM have been presented (divided in three parts according to the target group children, parents or local authorities and schools employees) such as animations, culinary workshops learning sessions, tasting, sensitisation of parents and trainings for schools employees. Some difficulties have been mentioned, for instance there is a considerable heterogeneity and many different types of AM as the available money provided exclusively by local authorities is the main selection criterion, for the same reason some communities are frustrated as they can not offer children the AM they wish due to insufficient financial resources. The effective evaluation of the AM is still an issue. Interfel suggested that the AM should be co-financed.

1.7 The evaluation

- Méthodologie d'évaluation du chantier sur la relance de la consommation des fruits par les gens by M.Padilla, CIHEAM France. Presentation on how the evaluation procedure is organised in France and on the main results. Some 100 school children are questioned before and after the distribution of the F&V on the basis of a KABP (knowledge, attitudes, Behaviours, Practices) questionnaire. Surveys are also given to parents and schools principals. The evaluation proved a positive impact of the measure to both children and parents. The results showed that children tend to ask for broad product diversity, and the program stimulated children in terms of taste and health while parents are more concerned by quality and price. Additionally, although level of knowledge got improved thanks to the accompanying measures there is a lot of confusion on messages and even definition of the "fruit". It has been also clear that pedagogic measures can only be effective through activities and not only learning sessions. Finally, cultural background is an important factor in F&V consumption. The following recommendations have been given: need to solve staff problems, there was more a qualitative problem than quantitative in F&V supply, important to chose the right moment for distribution (early morning break), need to simplify heavy administrative procedures.

- Monitoring and evaluating a SFS by D.Teeman, NFER, UK. Very useful information and advice have been given by D.Teeman on definitions, methods, suggesting a broad variety of core aims (i.e measuring over time F&V consumption before and after SFS and to compare any SFS impact across member States), objectives and measures for monitoring to be explored. The ultimate leading approach should remain "What works?".

- SFS- What it needs to become a Health Promotion best practice by J.Breda, WHO, Division of Health Programmes, Denmark. There is undoubtedly a discrepancy between the WHO recommendations for F&V and actual intake. Various surveys and evaluations have been made at the level of the WHO in order to address the question of barriers and drivers in F&V consumption and point out the influence of F&V policies in production, availability, accessibility and supply. Some of the main results are the following: the political awareness of the importance of the F&V consumption is visible but not enough actions are implemented, there is need to standardise definitions for F&V and F&V

intake, to increase the supply, to link agriculture and health, to strengthen the inter-sectoral work and to ensure that media also take an active role in promotion.

The main conclusions are listed below:

- SFS Objectives: To ensure market outlets for production (maybe limited yet legitimate in CAP perspective!) and to promote health, in order to tackle child obesity problem.
- There is a great variety of models, practices and experiences (list of products, organisation, accompanying measures etc.) that we need to diffuse, exchange and share (No size fits all). (→ Communication, web platform)
- The SFS needs to take into account the importance of mentality shaped in school as children spend so much time in there. (→ Accompanying measures - AM)
- Need for wider involvement and cooperation of health and education authorities and stakeholders (→ stakeholders and experts groups, web platform, synergies)

- Simplification is needed, but we have to maintain the balance between control and simplification. Proofs for the cofinancing are needed in order to comply with the requirements of the Council regulation.
- Concerning the AM: define "what are they", "what their use is" and "what their limits are".
- Need for simple and clear indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of the scheme. (the "does it work?" approach)
- Member States are responsible for the implementation; it is essential that no additional burden is added through administrative requirements by MS.

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The 170th Management Committee for the Common Organisation of Agricultural Markets

List of participants 26 February 2010

Private Experts

Organism	Number of participants
WHO	1
NFER - National Foundation for Education and Research, UK	1
Karolinska Institute	1
Tipik	1
CIHEAM – Centre International de Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Méditerranéennes, France	1

Delegates

Member State	Ministry or Organism	Number of delegates
BE	Vlaamse overheid	2
	Ministère de la Région Wallonne	1
BG	Ministry of Agriculture	1
	DFZ	0
CZ	Ministry of Agriculture	1
	SAIF	1
DK	Fødevareministeriet - DFFE	2
DE	BMELV	1
	Bundesrat	1
EE	Ministry of Agriculture	1
IE	Dept Agriculture and Food	2
EL	Ministry of Agriculture	1

	OPEKE	2
ES	Ministerio de Agricultura Pesca y Alimentacion	1
FR	R. P France	1
IT	Ministero Agricoltura	2
	MIPAF	1
CY	Ministry of Agriculture	2
LV	Ministry of Agriculture	1
LT	Ministry of Agriculture	1
LU	Ministère de l'Agriculture	1
HU	Agricultural and Rural Development Agency	2
MT	Paying Agency	2
NL	Ministerie van Landbouw	2
	Produktschap Tuinbouw	1
AT	Agramarkt	1
PL	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	1
	Agricultural market agency	1
PT	Ministerio da Agricultura (GPP)	3
RO	Permanent representation	1
SI	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food	1
	Agency for Rural Development	1
SK	State Vetrinary and Food Administration	1
	Agricultural Paying Agency	1
FI	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	1
	Agency for Rural Affaires	1
SE	Swedish Board	1
UK	DEFRA	1
	Scottish Government	1

