



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



12827/09 (Presse 256)

PRESS RELEASE

2959th Council meeting

Agriculture and Fisheries

Brussels, 7 September 2009

President **Eskil ERLANDSSON**
Minister for Agriculture of Sweden

P R E S S

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12827/09 (Presse 256)

Main results of the Council

The Council had a detailed and constructive exchange of views on the Commission's Communication on the dairy market situation and will return to the issue in October.

The Council took note of a report from the High Level group on the competitiveness of the Agro-food Industry.

Without discussion, the Council adopted new rules for animal by-products and two regulations to improve the performance and safety of the European aviation system.

CONTENTS¹

PARTICIPANTS	5
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ITEMS DEBATED

Dairy market situation	7
High Level Group on the Competitiveness of the Agro-Food Industry	8
OTHER BUSINESS	9
Transport of live animals - satellite surveillance and database	9
Measures to stabilise the cereals market	9
Milk quotas management	10
Simplification of the CAP	10
Catastrophic fires in Greece	10
Feed market situation	11
WTO - DDA Negotiations	11
Crisis in the pig meat sector	11

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

AGRICULTURE

— New rules for animal by-products	12
--	----

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

— Mongolia - Negotiations for a partnership agreement	12
---	----

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

— Ninth EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council	12
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¹ Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

BUDGET

- Mobilisation of the EU Solidarity Fund for France 13
- Additional EU appropriations for new needs 13

TRANSPORT

- Aviation package 13

TRADE POLICY

- Anti-dumping - magnesia bricks - China 14
- Agreement on trade in textile products with Belarus 14
- Information technology agreement review 14
- EU - Brazil Agreement 14

*DECISIONS TAKEN BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE**TRADE POLICY*

- Anti-dumping - tube and pipe fittings - China, Thailand, Taiwan 15
- Anti-dumping - stainless steel fasteners - Vietnam 15

APPOINTMENT

- Committee of the Regions 16

PARTICIPANTS

The Governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Ms Sabine LARUELLE

Mr Kris PEETERS

Mr Benoît LUTGEN

Minister for SMEs, the Self-Employed, Agriculture and Science Policy

Minister-President of the Flemish Government and Flemish Minister for Institutional Reform, Ports, Agriculture, Sea Fisheries and Rural Policy

Minister for Agriculture, Rural Affairs, the Environment and Tourism (Walloon Region)

Bulgaria:

Mr Miroslav NAYDENOV

Minister for Agriculture and Food

Czech Republic:

Mr Jakub ŠEBESTA

Minister for Agriculture

Danemark:

Ms Eva KJER HANSEN

Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries

Germany:

Ms Ilse AIGNER

Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection

Estonia:

Mr Gert ANTSU

Deputy Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr Brendan SMITH

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Greece:

Mr Christos AVGOULAS

Secretary General for Agricultural Policy and International Affairs, Ministry of Rural Development and Food

Spain:

Ms Elena ESPINOSA MANGANA

Minister for the Environment and the Rural and Marine Environment

France:

Mr Bruno LE MAIRE

Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries

Italy

Mr Luca ZAIA

Minister for Agricultural and Forestry Policy

Cyprus:

Ms Egly PANTELAKIS

Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture

Latvia:

Mr Jānis DŪKLAVS

Minister for Agriculture

Lithuania:

Mr Kazimieras STARKEVIČIUS

Mr Mindaugas KUKLIERIUS

Minister for Agriculture

Vice-Minister for Agriculture

Luxembourg:

Mr Romain SCHNEIDER

Minister for Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development

Hungary:

Mr József GRÁF

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

Malta:

Mr Josep DE GIORGIO

Director

Netherlands:

Ms Gerda VERBURG

Minister for Agriculture, Nature, and Food Quality

Austria:

Mr Nikolaus BERLAKOVICH

Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, the
Environment, and Water Management**Pologne:**

Mr Marek SAWICKI

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

Portugal:

Mr Jaime SILVA

Minister for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries

Romania:

Mr Liviu HARBUZ

State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and
Rural Development**Slovenia:**

Mr Milan POGAČNIK

Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Food

Slovakia:

Mr Vladimír PALŠA

State Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture

Finland:

Ms Sirkka-Liisa ANTILA

Minister for Agriculture and Forestry

Sweden:

Mr Eskil ERLANDSSON

Minister for Agriculture

Mr Rolf ERIKSSON

State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture

United Kingdom:

Mr Hilary BENN

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural
Affairs

Mr Richard LOCHHEAD

Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and
Environment**Commission:**

Ms Mariann FISCHER BOEL

Member

Ms Androulla VASSILIOU

Member

ITEMS DEBATED

Dairy market situation

The Council took note of the Commission communication on the dairy market situation in 2009 ([12289/09](#)) and held an exchange of views on the matter in the context of a Presidency questionnaire ([12189/09](#)).

Most delegations welcomed the in-depth analysis carried out by the Commission and the market measures undertaken since the beginning of the crisis, but had divergent views on which additional measures would be best suited to solve the current difficulties. However, the outcome of the health check was not called into question ([13035/09](#)).

Several delegations indicated that the measures listed in the communication were insufficient to solve the crisis.

Comments were made inter alia regarding quota management on an individual producer level, the proposed temporary state aids and the use of Article 68 of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009.

The Council took note of the views of all delegations, including those reflected in documents [13035/09](#) and [13036/09](#).

The Council instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture to further examine the issue with a view to a new discussion at Council in October.

The Commission representative ruled out those suggestions which she estimated could contradict the “Health Check” commitments, such as the increasing of intervention prices or the freezing of dairy quotas, requested by some member states. However, she declared that she was ready to look closely at another set of suggestions addressing labelling, quality, or promotion issues.

The communication is a response to the June European Council's request for an in-depth market analysis and possible options for stabilising the dairy market while respecting the outcome of the Health Check results.

High Level Group on the Competitiveness of the Agro-Food Industry

The Council took note of the outcome of the work of the High Level Group (HLG) on the Competitiveness of the Agro-Food Industry presented by the Commission ([12203/09](#)).

The HLG report issued in March contained thirty recommendations and in July the HLG endorsed a 'roadmap of key initiatives' to implement them.

Member states generally welcomed the recommendations to:

- make better use of instruments available to support the competitiveness of SMEs;
- facilitate innovation and the development of new food processing technologies;
- establish a European forum that will address the relationships among the players in the food chain, and in particular between producers/processors/distributors;
- promote best practices and avoid anti-competitive activities by drawing up an EU wide code of conduct;
- rebalance the asymmetry of the bargaining power in the food supply chain.

The High Level Group on the Competitiveness of the Agro-Food Industry was set up by the Commission in 2008 to bring together representatives from the Commission, Member States, the European Parliament, the food industry, the agricultural sector, retailers and consumers, with the task of making recommendations for promoting the sustainable development and competitiveness of the European agro-food sector.

For HLG road map:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemshortdetail.cfm?item_id=2954&lang=sv&tpa_id=156

OTHER BUSINESS**Transport of live animals - satellite surveillance and database***Request from the Netherlands delegation*

The Council took note of the views expressed by the Netherlands delegation, supported by Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Austria and the United-Kingdom, regarding the need for new instruments to control and inspect transport of live animals more effectively, such as satellite navigation systems ([12375/09](#)).

Health Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou declared that a draft proposal amending Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 was currently in inter-service consultation within the Commission services and would be released as soon as possible.

Measures to stabilise the cereals market*Request from the Polish delegation*

The Council took note of the request made by Poland, supported by Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Austria, Slovakia and Finland, inviting the Commission to take concrete measures aimed at stabilising the cereals market. Poland suggested a number of new possible intervention instruments and the rapid use of existing ones under EC legislation ([12796/09](#)).

The Commission representative replied that there were no possibilities of targeted support for certain members of the European Union. She mentioned that low prices might alleviate the difficulties encountered by certain livestock producers in feed supply. She pointed out that the direct payments had been moved forward to 16 October to help farmers facing difficulties.

Milk quotas management

Request from the Polish delegation

The Council took note of the request from the Polish delegation to amend Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 to allow Member States to make the conversion between 'deliveries' and 'direct sales' of national quotas.

The Commission representative replied that such flexibility of the milk quota system was discussed but discarded during the health check discussions and that the Commission saw no reason to change position ([12846/09](#)).

Simplification of the CAP

Request from the German delegation

The Council took note of the views expressed by the German delegation, supported by a large number of delegations¹, regarding the issue of simplification of the CAP, to which the Swedish Presidency intends to return² in November ([12836/09](#)).

Catastrophic fires in Greece

Information from the Greek delegation

The Council took note of the information provided by the Greek delegation, supported by the Cypriot delegation ([12853/09](#)).

Commissioner Fischer Boel said that her services would examine, as soon as they were notified by the Greek authorities, the use of rural-development measures for the period 2007 - 2013 connected with reforestation and restoring forestry production following natural disasters.

The Spanish delegation mentioned that the prevention of forest fires will be discussed during its upcoming Presidency.

¹ The Belgian, Czech, Danish, Estonian, Irish, Cypriot, Spanish, French, Latvian, Lithuanian, Netherlands, Austrian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovenian, Slovak and United Kingdom delegations.

² In particular on the basis of several suggestions made by a number of Member States (set out in document [9103/09](#)).

Feed market situation*Verbal information from the Commission*

The Council took note of the state of play in the feed market presented by Commissioner Fischer Boel and of the comments made by delegations.

WTO - DDA Negotiations*State of play*

The Council took note of the information provided by Commissioner Fischer Boel on the latest state of play in negotiations on agriculture issues following several informal bilateral contacts made during a meeting of trade ministers from 35 WTO member states hosted by India in New Delhi from 3 to 5 September.

Crisis in the pig meat sector*Request from the French delegation*

The Council took note of the request made by the French delegation and supported by other delegations to reintroduce export refunds in support of the pig meat sector ([12875/09](#)).

The Commission representative maintained¹ the position that no measure is required at this stage.

¹ This point was on the agenda of the Council, under AOB, in January, March, April and May 2009.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**AGRICULTURE****New rules for animal by-products**

The Council adopted a regulation modernising the EU rules for so called animal by-products ([3639/09](#)), following a first-reading agreement with the European Parliament. For more details, see ([12921/09](#)).

EXTERNAL RELATIONS**Mongolia - Negotiations for a partnership agreement**

The Council adopted a decision authorising the Commission to open negotiations for a framework agreement on partnership and cooperation with Mongolia.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS**Ninth EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council**

The Council approved the EU position in view of the ninth meeting of the EU-Uzbekistan Co-operation Council, which will take place in Brussels on 14 September 2009.

BUDGET

Mobilisation of the EU Solidarity Fund for France

The Council adopted a decision mobilising the EU Solidarity Fund for an amount of EUR 109.4 million for France, following the major storm ("Klaus") which hit the south-western part of that country in January 2009 ([11289/09](#)). It also established draft amending budget No. 7 to the general budget for 2009, entailing an increase of EUR 109.4 million, in both commitment and payment appropriations, of the Solidarity Fund.

Additional EU appropriations for new needs

The Council established draft amending budget No. 8 to the general budget for 2009, increasing the commitment appropriations by EUR 51.6 million. This net financial impact is the result of the following factors:

- an increase of EUR 49.3 million for the item "Animal disease eradication and monitoring programmes and monitoring of the physical conditions of animals that could pose a public health risk linked to an external factor - New measures" in order to finance an emergency vaccination campaign to rapidly prevent the spread of the blue tongue disease outbreaks;
- a reinforcement of the EU subsidy to EUROJUST by EUR 3.9 million, of which EUR 1.6 million are covered by assigned revenue and EUR 2.3 million by fresh commitment appropriations.

TRANSPORT

Aviation package

The Council adopted two regulations to improve the performance and safety of the European aviation system - the first strengthens the Single European Sky legislation ([3640/09](#)), while the second extends the tasks of the European Aviation Safety Agency ([3641/09](#)).

Both regulations were adopted following a first-reading agreement reached with the European Parliament in March 2009.

For more details, see press release [12810/09](#).

TRADE POLICY**Anti-dumping - magnesia bricks - China**

The Council adopted two regulations amending regulation 1659/2005 imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty on imports of certain magnesia bricks originating in China ([12649/09](#), [12659/09](#)).

Agreement on trade in textile products with Belarus

The Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations on an agreement renewing the agreement on trade in textile products between the EU and Belarus.

Information technology agreement review

The Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations on the review of the information technology agreement.

EU - Brazil Agreement

The Council adopted a decision on the conclusion of an agreement between the EU and Brazil concerning certain agricultural products ([12107/2/09 REV 2](#)). This agreement is the result of negotiations started in the wake of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU within the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The Council also adopted a regulation transposing the content of the new agreement into EU law ([12104/09](#)).

DECISIONS TAKEN BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE**TRADE POLICY****Anti-dumping - tube and pipe fittings - China, Thailand, Taiwan**

The Council adopted¹ a regulation imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty on imports of certain tube and pipe fittings, of iron or steel, originating in China and Thailand, and those consigned from Taiwan, whether declared as originating in Taiwan or not, and repealing the exemption granted to Chup Hsin Enterprise Co. Ltd. and Nian Hong Pipe Fittings Co. Ltd. ([12593/1/09](#)).

Anti-dumping - stainless steel fasteners - Vietnam

The Council adopted² a regulation amending regulation (EC) No 1890/2005 imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty on imports of certain stainless steel fasteners and parts thereof originating, inter alia, in Vietnam ([12433/09](#)).

¹ By written procedure on 27 August 2009.

² By written procedure on 17 August 2009.

APPOINTMENT**Committee of the Regions**

The Council adopted a decision appointing for the remainder of the current term of office, which ends on 25 January 2010, the following:

- Mr Dick BUURSINK, Gedeputeerde van de provincie Gelderland, as member from the Netherlands;
 - Mr Co VERDAAS, Gedeputeerde van de provincie Overijssel, as alternate member from the Netherlands;
 - Mr Erwin MOHR, Gemeinderat in Markt Wolfurt (change of mandate), as member from Austria.
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