



AGRICULTURE Council

17 May 2016 in Brussels

The Council meeting will address agricultural matters only; it will start at 10.00 on Tuesday 17 May 2016 and will be chaired by Mr Martijn van Dam, Minister for Agriculture of the Netherlands.

*Firstly Ministers will have an exchange of views on the relation between **agriculture and climate**, in light of the Paris climate agreement of December 2015. Ministers will have the opportunity to express their views on the implementation of the Paris agreement and the role of agriculture in climate mitigation and adaptation. Commissioner Arias Cañete and Commissioner Hogan will participate in the debate.*

*Then the Council will have an exchange of views on the latest developments in **animal welfare**. More specifically the discussion will focus on the results of the second Eurobarometer survey on animal welfare, consequences for future EU policy and on the establishment of an EU platform on animal welfare and its possible agenda.*

*The Czech delegation will (as an any other business item) express concerns about **dual quality of foodstuffs** on the EU common market.*

*The Council will be informed on the state of play and next steps regarding the **simplification** of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The debate will focus on direct payments and market measures, with the exception of greening.*

*The Council will also consider the **agricultural market developments**, especially concerning the dairy, pigmeat and fruit and vegetables sectors, and the implementation of **the package of market measures** agreed at the March Council in support of the European farmers. A few any other business points on the current difficulties in the **dairy sector** and the situation in the **commodity markets** and the effects of late **frost and snow** will also be considered jointly with the market situation.*

*Under any other business, ministers will also have the opportunity to be informed on the outcome of the recent **G7 meeting of agriculture ministers, TTIP and other international trade negotiations**, the **protection of geographical indications in international trade negotiations** and the impact of the **National Emission Ceilings directive** on the agricultural sector.*

A press conference will be held at the end of the meeting (at around 19.00).

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Press conferences and public events by video streaming: <http://video.consilium.europa.eu>

Video coverage in broadcast quality (MPEG4) and photo gallery: www.eucouncil.tv

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¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture and climate

Ministers will have an exchange of views on the relation between agriculture and climate, in light of the Paris climate agreement of December 2015 ([8772/16](#)). Ministers will be able to express their views on the implementation of the Paris agreement, the role of the bio-economy, how to integrate land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) into climate change targets and achieve the latter without threatening food production.

The Paris climate agreement was reached on 12 December 2015 during COP 21. The EU committed to cut greenhouse gas emissions in EU territory by at least 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. Regarding those sectors not covered by the emission trading system (ETS), agriculture for instance, the Commission is currently working on LULUCF and the effort sharing decision (ESD), with a view to adopting legislative proposals by mid-2016.

Animal welfare

The Council will be briefed by the Commission and have an exchange of views on the results of the second Eurobarometer survey on animal welfare, its consequences for future EU policy and on the establishment of an EU platform on animal welfare and its possible agenda ([8410/16](#)). Ministers will be invited to make suggestions regarding the topics this platform should address.

The EU platform on animal welfare was already discussed in February 2016, when the Council expressed broad support for its establishment.

Simplification of the Common Agricultural Policy

The Council will be informed on the state of play and next steps regarding the simplification of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The debate will focus on direct payments and market measures, with the exception of greening, which will be the object of a separate Council discussion in June 2016 ([8592/16](#)). The Commission is expected to present its current and future initiatives, as a follow-up to the Council conclusions on CAP simplification ([8485/15](#)).

CAP simplification is part of the EU's overall strategy to streamline and reduce EU legislation wherever possible. In this context, the EU institutions decided to look at what has been agreed in the latest CAP reform and propose improvements achievable in the short and medium term.

The Council adopted conclusions on the issue in May 2015 emphasising that, in implementing the CAP, greater account should be taken of the subsidiarity and proportionality principles. It also recalled the main principles to be respected in this process:

- preserve the policy objectives and the main elements of the reformed CAP,
- ensure the sound financial management of EU funds,
- focus on areas where those implementing the CAP as well as its beneficiaries would benefit most,
- improve the clarity and consistency of legislation.

Conclusions pointed to a short-term focus on the review of delegated and implementing acts of the reformed CAP. In the longer term, simplification efforts should also be made on the basic acts.

Market situation

The Commission will update the Council on the latest developments concerning those agriculture sectors that are currently facing particular difficulties, notably the dairy, pigmeat and fruit and vegetables sectors ([8803/16](#)). The Commission will also be invited to provide information on the implementation of the package of support measures agreed on at the Council meeting on 14 March.

A few any other business points on the effects of late frost and snow, the current difficulties in the dairy sector and the situation in the commodity markets will also be considered jointly with the market situation, see below in this document.

On 14 March 2016, ministers discussed the difficulties currently faced by European farmers in several agricultural sectors and agreed with the Commission to take decisive and timely action to supplement the September 2015 anti-crisis aid package with a set of additional measures.

At the end of the meeting, the President of the Council drew conclusions on market situation and support measures ([7108/16](#)), and instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture to follow up on the new measures and initiatives in order to facilitate their effective and rapid implementation. Ministers are also keeping developments in the market situation under close scrutiny.

A further debate on this topic is expected for the June Council.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Dual quality of foodstuffs on the EU common market

At the request of the Czech delegation, ministers will discuss food sold in the common market of the European Union under the same trademark but presenting differences in its content and quality in individual Member States ([8754/16](#)).

The issue of dual quality of foodstuffs was recently discussed at the meeting of agriculture ministers of the extended Visegrad Group countries, held in Prague on 29th April 2016. On that occasion participants voiced the need to find a solution at the European level with the clear objective of protecting consumers.

Crisis situation in the dairy market

At the request of the Croatian delegation and in the context of the wider discussion on the market situation, ministers will consider the specific situation of the dairy sector ([8789/16](#)) and the possible need for additional measures within the Common Agricultural Policy.

The situation in the commodity markets (outcome of the meeting of the extended Visegrad group (Prague, 29 April 2016))

The members of the Visegrad group and Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia and Austria will debrief the Council on the outcome of the extended Visegrad group and their joint statement on the situation of the commodities markets ([8676/16](#)). This point will be discussed jointly with others in the context of the wider discussion on the market situation.

Damages to agriculture due to late frost and snow

The Austrian, Slovenian and Slovakian delegations will inform delegations on the impact on the agriculture production of their countries of late frost and snow ([8788/16](#)).

G7 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting (Niigata, Japan, 23-24 April 2016)

The Commission will brief ministers on the outcome of the meeting of G7 agriculture ministers of last April in Japan ([8660/16](#)).

The G7 Summit includes Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy and Canada, as well as the presidents of the European Council and the European Commission.

The April meeting was only the 2nd G7 Agriculture Ministerial, after the one held in 2009 under the Italian Presidency, and was held in response to the food price crisis. The main themes Japan put forward for the meeting were: revitalising rural areas and increasing farmers' income, improving agricultural productivity and food supply capacity, and realising sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

It is expected that Italy, the next G7 presidency, will address the implementation of the Niigata Declaration in its programme.

TTIP and other international trade negotiations

At the request of the Austrian delegation ([8629/16](#)) the Commission will be invited to inform ministers on the state of play of free trade agreements and particularly the 13th round of TTIP negotiations.

As regards TTIP negotiations, the 13th negotiation round took place on 29 April 2016 and another round should be scheduled before the summer break, most likely in July. Both parties say they aim to conclude the negotiations by the end of 2016.

The Council discussed this topic at its meeting on 11 April 2016 when a group of delegations voiced their concern about FTA negotiations and asked for greater involvement of agriculture ministers ([7629/16](#)).

Protection of geographical indications in international trade negotiations

The Greek delegation will brief ministers on the need to defend Protected Designations of Origin (PDOs) from unfair competition in the context of international trade negotiations and on the necessity to involve agriculture minister more in such negotiations (8790/16). This point will be discussed jointly with the other AoB point on TTIP and other international trade negotiations.

National Emission Ceilings (NEC) directive and the agricultural sector

The Polish delegation will express its concerns regarding the negotiations on the NEC directive (7946/16), with particular focus on the reduction of ammonia emissions and its possible impact on EU farmers.

The proposal for a directive on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants was submitted to the Council and the European Parliament (EP) on 20 December 2013 ([18167/13](#)). The EP Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety voted its amendments on 28 October 2015 ([13347/15](#)) and the Environment Council reached a general approach on 16 December 2015 ([15401/15](#)).

Trilogues have been going on with a view to reaching a first reading agreement before the end of the Netherlands Presidency.