



AGRICULTURE and FISHERIES Council

11 May 2015 in Brussels

The Council meeting will address agricultural matters; it will start at 10.00 on Monday 11 May 2015. The Council will be chaired by Mr Jānis DŪKLAVS Latvia's Minister for Agriculture.

*Ministers will try reach agreement on a general approach on a proposal for a regulation regarding **organic farming**.*

*The Council is also expected to adopt conclusions on the **simplification of the Common Agricultural Policy** (CAP).*

*Finally, the Council will be briefed on the **World Honeybee Day** and on a **conference about pig welfare**.*

*The Presidency will invite ministers for a lunch on **organic farming**.*

A press conference will be held at the end of the meeting (+/- 17.00).

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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 on: www.eucouncil.tv

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

AGRICULTURE

Organic farming - General approach

The Council will try reach agreement on a general approach on a proposal for a regulation on organic farming ([8576/15](#)).

The proposal is aimed at revising the existing legislation on organic production and labelling of organic products so as to remove obstacles to the development of organic production in the EU, guarantee fair competition for farmers and operators and improve consumer confidence in organic products.

A general approach comprises a political agreement on the position of the Council on a proposal for a regulation. The agreement sought on organic production and labelling of organic products will make it possible to launch negotiations between the Parliament and the Council with a view to reaching a political agreement between the EU institutions. In the Parliament, the vote on the report presented by the rapporteur is expected to take place in mid-July 2015 in the Committee for Agriculture and Rural development. The subsequent vote in plenary is scheduled for September or October in order to allow trilogues to start under the Luxembourg Presidency.

In December last year, the Council gave broad support to the political guidelines presented by the Italian Presidency. The last debate on this proposal organised by the current Presidency in the Council was held in March this year.

CAP simplification - Council conclusions

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on the simplification of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) ([8485/15](#)).

Since the beginning of 2015, this issue has become one of the priorities for the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission. In recent months, the Presidency has consulted ministers and summarised their views on priority areas for simplification, based on the national experiences of implementation of the recently reformed CAP ([8483/15](#)).

The Council held a policy debate on implementation and simplification of the CAP in March. The most important issues in the area of direct payments identified by member states as needing simplification were 'greening' measures and controls. Other matters listed were reporting requirements and, in the area of rural development, the programming, approval and state aid procedures.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

World Honeybee Day

The Council will be briefed by the Slovenian delegation on an initiative to declare 20 May as the World Honeybee Day ([8378/15](#)).

Slovenia will provide more information about its campaign for the United Nations to designate 20 May as World Honeybee Day. This date was proposed to commemorate the birthday of the Slovenian beekeeper Anton Janša (1734-1773), a pioneer of modern beekeeping.

A world day would remind that honeybees are crucial to agriculture. Though in recent years bees have had to face several threats, they still constitute the most important pollinators for many crops and are also a key indicator of the state of the environment.

Conference on pig welfare

The Danish delegation will brief the ministers about the outcome of the conference “Improving pig welfare – what are the ways forward?” which was held on 29-30 April 2015 in Copenhagen and about a position paper requesting a revision of directive 2008/120 laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs ([8596/15](#)).

The position paper was signed by the agricultural ministers of Germany, The Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark attending the conference.
