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PRESS RELEASEPurchase prices and import system for fruit and vegetables

The Commission has just submitted to the Council several proposals for regulations dealing with fruit and vegetables. The first fixes basic prices and purchase prices for cauliflowers and certain varieties of fruit; the others concern the co-ordination and standardization of systems of importation from non-member countries. These regulations, together with the supplementary provisions on the joint market organization in this sector, are to come into force on 1 January 1967.

The proposals on prices concern cauliflowers, sweet oranges, tangerines, lemons, apples and pears. The Commission proposes basic prices which, according to the supplementary regulation (No. 159/66), are equal to the arithmetical average of prices applying during the three preceding marketing years on the representative Community market(s) in the surplus-producing areas where prices are lowest. The purchase price is then fixed for each product at between 40 and 50% of the basic price for cauliflowers, 50 and 55% for apples and pears, and 60 and 70% for citrus fruits. The purchase price serves as a basis for determining the level of prices below which governments may decide to support the market, and the amount of compensation to be given.

During a transition period of three years, the Member States may fix these prices at a higher level, but not over 70% of the basic price.

Member States are free to decide whether or not to support the market.

The Commission has proposed the following prices:
(in u.a. per 100 kg. for top quality)

<u>Product and variety</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Basic price</u>	<u>Purchase price</u>	
<u>Cauliflowers in leaf</u>	January	9.3	3.7	
	February	7.9	3.1	
	March	11.0	4.4	
	April	10.1	4.0	
<u>Sweet oranges</u>				
	Sanguinello	January	13.7	9.5
		February	15.0	10.5
		March	17.5	11.5
Biondo comune	April	10.8	6.5	

<u>Product and variety</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Basic price</u>	<u>Purchase price</u>
<u>Tangerines</u>	January	14.2	9.5
	February	15.3	10.0
<u>Lemons</u>	January to end of April	10.2	7.0
<u>Apples</u>			
Golden delicious (not less than 70 mm.)	January	15.1	8.0
	February	16.4	9.0
	March	18.2	10.0
	April	22.3	11.5
	May	25.6	13.0
<u>Pears</u>			
Passe Crassane (not less than 70 mm.)	January till end of March	17.7	9.5
Conference (not less than 60 mm.)			

The proposal on the system for imports from third countries is concerned both with liberalizing this system and with the safeguard clause. All charges equivalent in effect to customs duties and all quantitative restrictions or measures of equivalent effect are forbidden, unless otherwise provided in the basic regulation (reference price) or in a waiver by the Council. These provisions will come into effect on 1 January 1967 for cauliflowers, tomatoes, sweet oranges, tangerines, lemons, dessert grapes, apples, pears and peaches. For other fruits and vegetables, except potatoes, the date is 1 July 1968.

Liberalization is to be accompanied by a Community safeguard clause administered by the Commission. The Council decides the procedures to be followed. If a Member State makes a request to the Commission, the latter must take a decision within two days and its decision is immediately applicable. Any Member State may refer the Commission's decision to the Council within three working days after notification. The Council will then meet immediately and may, by qualified majority, amend or annul the Commission's decision.