

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

437th meeting of the Council

- Agriculture -

Brussels, 14-15 February 1977

President: Mr John SILKIN
Minister for Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food
of the United Kingdom

201/77 (Presse 10)

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 16 February 1977
201/77 (Presse 19) Corr. 1

C O R R I G E N D U M

to Press Release

No 201/77 (Presse 19)

of 14/15 February 1977

Page 6, "FISHERIES", First paragraph :

Read : Concluding its examination of the interim measures for the conservation and management of fishery resources, the Council today agreed a series of measures in this sector, subject to a reservation by the Danish delegation.

Page 7, penultimate paragraph :

Read : The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to examine the text containing this series of decisions subject to a reserve by one delegation, so that it could adopt them, after their legal finalization, at the earliest opportunity.

15.II.77

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

Belgium:

Mr Albert LAVENS Minister for Agriculture

Denmark:

Mr Poul DALSGER Minister for Agriculture

Germany:

Mr Josef ERTL Federal Minister for Agriculture
Mr Hans-Jürgen ROHR State Secretary,
Ministry of Agriculture

France:

Mr Christian BONNET Minister for Agriculture
Mr Pierre MEHAIGNERIE State Secretary,
Ministry of Agriculture

Ireland:

Mr Mark CLINTON Minister for Agriculture
Mr Patrick DONEGAN Minister for Fisheries

Italy:

Mr Giovanni MARCORÀ Minister for Agriculture
Mr Arcangelo LO BIANCO Deputy State Secretary,
Ministry of Agriculture

Luxembourg:

Mr Jean HAMILIUS Minister for Agriculture
Mr Albert BERCHEM State Secretary,
Ministry of Agriculture

15.II.77

Netherlands:

Mr A.P.L.M.M. VAN DER STEE	Minister for Agriculture
Mr L.J. BRINKHORST	State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

United Kingdom:

Mr John SILKIN	Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Mr Gavin STRANG	Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Mr Robert MACLENNAN	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Prices and Consumer Protection

Commission:

Mr Roy JENKINS	President
Mr Finn Olav GUNDELACH	Vice President

15.02.77

PROPOSALS ON AGRICULTURAL PRICES

Mr GUNDELACH, Commissioner responsible for agriculture, introduced the Commission proposals on the fixing of prices for certain agricultural products for 1977/1978 and related measures.

Following this introduction, preliminary reactions both of a general and of a specific nature were made by delegations on this subject.

The Council agreed to examine the substance of these proposals, in the light of the Opinions to be delivered by the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee, at its forthcoming meetings devoted to agriculture on 14 and 15 and 25, 26 and 27 March 1977.

MARKET IN POTATOES

The Council held a general discussion on the proposal for a Regulation on the common organization of the market in potatoes.

Following this discussion, it instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture to examine in greater depth the questions raised by this proposal in the light of today's discussions in order to enable the Council to resume its discussions on this subject at a forthcoming meeting.

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The Council also agreed to extend the total and temporary suspension of the **Common** Customs Tariff duties on potatoes in accordance with the arrangements given on page II of this Press Release.

FISHERIES

Concluding its examination of the interim measures for the conservation and management of fishery resources, the Council today agreed a series of measures in this sector.

Specifically, it reached agreement on measures relating to by-catches and the ban on fishing for Norway pout, and was able to confirm the consensus reached at its meeting on 8 February last.

In summary, the decisions reached then concerned:

- the immediate examination of the NEAFC recommendations on the use and transport of different mesh, with a view to the introduction of wider mesh under certain conditions;
- subsequent examination of restrictions on the use of seines;
- a ban on the direct fishing of herring stocks in the North Sea (with the exception of unavoidable and limited by-catches) from 28 February to 30 April 1977;
- a ban on the direct fishing of herring stocks in the Celtic Sea from 1 March to 31 December 1977;
- subsequent examination of the herring stocks situation in the Irish Sea and in the waters close to the north-west and south-west coasts of Ireland.

The specific measures agreed today concern:

- a reduction of by-catches to 20% as from 1 April 1977, and a further examination of this issue in the light of scientific advice and on the basis of Commission proposals before the end of May 1977;
- fixing the limits of the zone in the North Sea within which fishing for Norway pout is to be banned at longitude 0° - 4° W and latitude 56° - 60° N as from 21 February until the end of March 1977; a further decision on action applicable as from 1 August 1977 is to be taken in the light of scientific advice and on the basis of a Commission proposal.

The Council also agreed to prohibit the use of vessels which carry out processing operations additional to those of salting, boiling of shrimps, filleting, freezing, reducing offal and reducing unavoidable by-catches subject to the authorized maximum.

The Council instructed the Commission to continue its study of transshipment in order to enable it to reconsider the matter at a forthcoming meeting.

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to examine the text containing this series of decisions subject to a waiting reserve by one delegation, so that it could adopt them, after their legal finalization, at the earliest opportunity.

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The Council also agreed to the signing of the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the European Economic Community on fishing off the coasts of the United States. This Agreement will be signed in Washington today.

WINE SECTOR

The Council discussed the problems arising with regard to the situation on the market and trends in intra-Community trade during the new wine year, and particularly since the entry into force last December of the new guide and activating prices. The matter of the effects of indirect taxes on trends in trade was also raised in this context.

Following its discussions, the Council took note of a statement by the Commission representative, who pointed out that the Commission would expedite its study of the proposals to be submitted in order to contribute to the solution of structural problems and to adjust certain aspects of the organization of the market.

STRUCTURAL POLICY

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, the Regulation on common measures to improve the conditions under which agricultural products are processed and marketed (to which it had agreed in principle at its meeting on 20 December last). The particular purpose of this Regulation is to encourage investments intended to rationalize and improve intermediate activities between farmers and consumers.

In the context of the adoption of this Regulation, the Council agreed to expedite proceedings concerning the proposal for a Regulation concerning producer groups and associations thereof. In a resolution, it undertook to take a decision before 30 June 1977 on the new proposals, including proposals concerning the financial implications, to be submitted to it by the Commission before 30 April.

The Council also raised the matter of the adjustment of the amounts of aid provided for in various texts concerning the socio-structural policy. It agreed to continue its discussions on this matter at a forthcoming meeting.

MONETARY COMPENSATORY AMOUNTS FOR PIGMEAT

The Council discussed the problem raised by the United Kingdom concerning the methods used for calculating monetary compensatory amounts for pigmeat.

In this context, several delegations also commented on the general aspects of the system of monetary compensatory amounts and on the difficulties in implementing it.

The Commission said it would continue to examine attentively all the problems raised in this area with a view to finding appropriate Community solutions.

MISCELLANEOUS STATEMENTS

The Council took note of various statements concerning

- the transfer of common wheat for intervention to Italy (Italian delegation), following which the Council agreed in principle to the transfer of 300,000 tonnes of common wheat from the German intervention agency and 50,000 tonnes of durum wheat from the French intervention agency to the Italian intervention agency. The arrangements for this transfer will be examined by the Permanent Representatives Committee at the earliest opportunity;
- the market in hops (German delegation), drawing attention to the persistence of structural problems in this sector and inviting the Commission to make the necessary proposals. Matters relating to this sector will be included on the agenda for the next Council meeting devoted to agriculture;
- monetary compensatory amounts on processed products (Irish delegation), drawing attention to the importance of certain discrimination problems which might arise from the non-application of monetary compensatory amounts to these products;
- imports of tomato concentrates (Italian delegation), drawing attention to the fact that imports of tomato concentrates, which were disrupting the Community market in these products, had been able to be made from third countries to certain Member States at prices lower than the Community minimum price as a result of the application of different rates of exchange.

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities a series of measures concerning the beef and veal sector contained in

- the Regulations

- repealing Regulations (EEC) Nos 888/68, 990/68 and 752/74 concerning the beef and veal sector;
 - adapting Regulations (EEC) Nos 885/68 and 1302/73 following amendments to the system applicable to the common organization of the market in beef and veal;
 - amending Regulation (EEC) No 989/68 laying down general rules for granting private storage aid for beef and veal;
 - amending Regulation (EEC) No 98/69 laying down general rules for the disposal of frozen beef and veal by intervention agencies;
 - laying down general rules for the system of compensatory amounts for beef and veal;
- the Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2453/76 on the transfer to the Italian intervention agency of frozen beef held by the intervention agencies of other Member States;
- the Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 805/68 on the common organization of the market in beef and veal and adapting Regulation (EEC) No 827/68 and Regulation (EEC) No 950/68 on the Common Customs Tariff.

The Council further adopted in the official languages of the Communities,

- the estimate of young male bovine animals weighing 300 kg or less and intended for fattening for the period from 1 April to 31 December 1977.

II

The Council also adopted in the official languages of the Communities

- the Regulations

- amending Regulation (EEC) No 315/68 fixing quality standards for flowering bulbs, corms and tubers;
- temporarily and totally suspending the autonomous Common Customs Tariff duties on new potatoes falling within subheading 07.01 A II a) (from 1 March to 31 March 1977) and on other potatoes falling within subheading 07.01 A III b) (from 1 March to 15 April 1977);
- amending Regulation (EEC) No 2511/69 laying down special measures for improving the production and marketing of Community citrus fruit;
- laying down special measures in respect of the Beneventano variety of tobacco.

In this connection, the Council took note of a Commission report to the Council concerning the quantities of raw tobacco from the 1973 crop taken over by the intervention agencies;

- the Directives

- amending Directive 76/625/EEC concerning the statistical surveys to be carried out by the Member States in order to determine the production potential of plantations of certain species of fruit trees;
- amending Directive 75/271/EEC concerning the Community list of less-favoured farming areas within the meaning of Directive 75/268/EEC (France).

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MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONSRelations with the ACP and the OCT

The Council approved the texts relating to the accession to the Lomé Convention of Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Cape Verde and Papua New Guinea and the draft exchanges of letters on the advance implementation of the trade provisions between the Community and these three countries.

These Agreements will be signed very shortly.

The Council further adopted the following decisions and regulations:

- the Decision adjusting the Decision of 29 June 1976 on the association of the OCT with the Community (adjustments necessitated by the already effective accession of three former OCT -- Surinam, Seychelles, Comoro State -- to the Lomé Convention);
- the Decision adjusting the amounts made available to the EDF (1975) for the ACP States on the one hand and for the OCT and FOD on the other;
- the Regulation amending the list of countries and territories in Regulation No 706/76 on the arrangements applicable to agricultural products and certain goods resulting from the processing of agricultural products originating in the ACP States or in the OCT;
- the Decision amending the list of countries and territories in Decision 76/198/EEC on import arrangements for rum, arrack and tafia falling within subheading 22.09 C I of the CCT and originating in the OCT;
- the Regulation amending Regulations (EEC) Nos 1464/76 and 1465/76 on the opening, allocation and administration of Community tariff quotas for rum, arrack and tafia falling within subheading 22.09 C I of the CCT and originating in the ACP States and the OCT.

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Commercial policy

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, the Regulation concerning the application of an anti-dumping duty on chains, for cycles and motorcycles, originating in Taiwan.

The Council also approved the signing of an Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Arab Republic of Egypt on trade in textiles.

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Food aid in the form of milk products

Within the framework of the second instalment of the 1976 programme of aid in the form of milk products, the Council agreed to the break-down by recipient body and country of destination of 12,000 tonnes of skimmed milk powder allocated to the NGO's (non-governmental organizations). It also adopted a number of technical arrangements concerning the distribution and routing of the aid.

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The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities

- the Directives

- on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the safeguarding of employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings, businesses, or parts of businesses;
- amending the first Directive on the establishment of common rules for certain types of carriage of goods by road between Member States;

- the Decisions

- adopting a technological research programme in the footwear sector;
- on the exporting of crude oil and petroleum products from one Member State to another in the event of supply difficulties.