

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

9938/80 (Presse 130)

658th meeting of the Council

- Agriculture -

Brussels, 30 September 1980

President:

Mr Camille NEY,
Minister for Agriculture, Viticulture,
Water and Forestry of the
Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

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

Belgium:

Mr Albert LAVENS Minister for Agriculture and
for Small Firms and Traders

Denmark:

Mr Poul DALSGER Minister for Agriculture

Germany:

Mr Hans-Jürgen ROHR State Secretary,
Federal Ministry of Food,
Agriculture and Forestry

France:

Mr Pierre MEHAIGNERIE Minister for Agriculture
Mr Jacques FOUCHIER State Secretary,
Ministry of Agriculture

Ireland:

Mr Ray MacSHARRY Minister for Agriculture

Italy:

Mr Ferruccio PISONI State Secretary,
Ministry of Agriculture and
Forestry

Luxembourg:

Mr Camille NEY

Minister for Agriculture,
Viticulture, Waters and Forestry

The Netherlands:

Mr Gerrit BRAKS

Minister for Agriculture

The United Kingdom:

Mr Peter WALKER

Minister for Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food

Mr Alick BUCHANAN-SMITH

Minister of State,
Ministry of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food

Commission:

Mr Finn Olav GUNDELACH

Vice-President

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USE OF HORMONES IN THE PRODUCTION OF VEAL

At the instigation of the Italian delegation the Council held an exchange of views on the use of hormones in the production of calves and veal.

All delegations emphasized the importance they attached to early solution of the problems which had recently jolted public opinion on the matter, and the Council was favourably disposed towards a ban on the use of oestrogens, whether natural or artificial.

The Council also signified its agreement to the desirability of greater harmonization of Community laws in the case of veterinary medicines too and a more efficient system of supervision in this field, at both the slaughtered meat and the production stage.

Lastly, it requested the Commission to submit the necessary proposals in good time for the Council to have a reasonable discussion on the issue at the earliest opportunity.

SHEEPMEAT SECTOR

Following a detailed exchange of views, during which it clarified the last questions remaining outstanding (notably with regard to the external aspect of the organization of the market in this sector), the Council signified its agreement in principle to the necessary regulations and to the content of the exchanges of letters on the voluntary restraint agreements with the main countries which export sheepmeat to the Community market.

The aspects of the compromise reached during today's Council discussions relate in particular to:

- = the level of the customs duty applicable to imports covered by voluntary restraint agreements (10%);
- = the defence of sensitive regions, including the duration of the protection offered (until 31.3.1984);
- = the import arrangements (certificates) and application of safeguard measures;
- = application of the rules for granting the slaughter premium and of those relating to intervention.

Decisions will be taken as soon as the procedures for consulting Greece and informing the relevant Committees of the European Parliament have been completed.

Consequent upon this agreement in principle and subject to completion of the procedures mentioned, it is envisaged that the system of organization of the market in this sector will enter into force on 20 October 1980, as regards both its external and internal aspects.

NEW ZEALAND BUTTER

After a brief exchange of views the Council confirmed its agreement in principle of 22 July providing for retention of the mechanisms of the present butter import arrangements together with an increase in the CIF price to be complied with by New Zealand (213.37 ECUs/100 kg, the equivalent of 75% of the intervention price of Community butter) and a special levy to be fixed by the Commission at 25.18 ECUs/100 kg. This adjustment will be made in exchange for a 20,000 tonne reduction in planned imports from New Zealand (95,000 tonnes instead of the 115,000 tonnes authorized for 1980).

This arrangement will be applicable as from 6 October 1980.

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The Council agreed to postpone discussion of the question of imports of New Zealand butter in 1981 and subsequent years until its next meeting, planned for 20/21 October 1980.

HORTICULTURE

The Council took note of an oral report by the Vice-President, Mr GUNDELACH, concerning distortion of competition in hothouse horticulture, with particular reference to the rates horticulturalists in the Netherlands were charged for natural gas. The Commission said that it would assume its responsibilities in the matter, on the basis in particular of Article 93 of the Treaty.

OILSEEDS

The Council held a brief exchange of views on amendment of the Regulation concerning the criteria for determining the world market price of oilseeds.

At the close of the debate, which concerned the desirability of adjusting current aid for oilseeds, the Council instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture to go into the questions still outstanding and to report back to the Council for its next meeting.

SITUATION ON THE PIGMEAT MARKET

On the basis of a Commission report, the Council held an exchange of views on the situation in the pigmeat sector, including the aspects relating to trade with third countries. The Commission report described in particular price trends since winter 1979/1980 and the support measures taken by the Commission. The various delegations gave their reactions and expressed their concern on the matter during the discussion.

INVESTMENT IN PIG PRODUCTION

The Council held an exchange of views on the amended text proposed by the Commission regarding the restrictions on investment aid in pigmeat production. It considered it desirable to resume examination of this issue in the context of its discussions on structural policy at its next meeting.

VARIOUS STATEMENTS

The Council noted the statements by various delegations, accompanied where appropriate, by the Commission's replies, on the following matters:

- = measure to facilitate the disposal of intervention butter, known as "Christmas butter" (German delegation);
- = expiry of the derogations for swine fever (Danish delegation);
- = sluice-gate price for poultry (United Kingdom delegation).

FUTURE OF COMMUNITY SUGAR ARRANGEMENTS

In view of the expiry on 30 June 1981 of the existing sugar arrangements, the Commission submitted to the Council its proposal for new arrangements for the organization of the market in sugar and isoglucose.

The Council instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture to examine the Commission proposal and agreed to resume its discussion on the new arrangements for sugar at its next meeting.

Other agricultural decisions

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulations:

- on measures to encourage the use of flax fibres for the 1980/1981 and 1981/1982 marketing years (encouragement of information programmes, search for new outlets and improved products);
- amending Regulation (EEC) No 315/68 fixing the quality standards for flowering bulbs, corms and tubers (addition of six varieties to the Annex to the Regulation in question);
- laying down general rules in respect of production aid for olive oil for the 1980/1981 marketing year (largely renewal with some amendments, of the rules applied during the previous marketing year);
- laying down special measures in respect of olive oil producer organizations for the 1980/1981 marketing year (maintenance for the next marketing year of the special measures of the previous year);
- amending Regulation (EEC) No 878/77 on the exchange rates to be applied in agriculture (clarification of the Annexes to Regulation (EEC) No 1366/80 and correction of a technical error).

Relations with the EFTA countries

The Council also adopted in the official languages of the Communities Decisions

- No 1/80 of the EEC-EFTA Joint Committees amending lists A and B annexed to Protocol No 3 on Origin (polishing discs or rings and rethreaded tyres);
- No 2/80 of the EEC-EFTA Joint Committees amending list B annexed to Protocol No 3 on Origin (imitation jewellery).

Fisheries policy

The Council also adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulation providing for certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources, to which it signified its agreement on 29 September 1980.

Bruxelles, le 26 septembre 1980.
Note BIO (80) 376 aux Bureaux Nationaux
c.c. aux Membres du Groupe

CONSEIL AGRICOLE : PREPARATION (KLAUS VAN DER PAS)

Les deux principaux points a l'ordre du jour du prochain Conseil Agricole, qui se reunira a Bruxelles mardi prochain a partir de 10 heures, sont le mouton et le beurre. Les ministres parleront egalement, a la demande italienne, des problemes poses par l'utilisation d'hormones dans l'elevage (voir note BIO (80) 367 du 24 septembre).

1. VIANDE OVINE

On peut esperer que les ministres arrivent finalement a debloquer l'organisation commune des marches dans ce secteur. Le reglement de base a deja ete approuve (voir Journal Officiel L 183 du 16 juillet 1980) mais son entree en vigueur depend de l'approbation des accords d'autolimitation que la Commission a negocies avec les pays tiers exportateurs de viande ovine. Ces negociations ont ete menees a bien avec la plupart des pays tiers concernes (Nouvelle-Zelande, Australie, Argentine, Pologne, Hongrie, pour ne mentionner que les plus importants) et le resultat sera soumis au Conseil. La France s'est opposee jusqu'ici a une formule, contenue dans ces accords, disant que la Communaute respectera ses courants d'exportations traditionnels si elle etait amenee a introduire des restitutions a l'exportation. Cette formule avait ete introduite pour rassurer des pays exportateurs tels que la Nouvelle-Zelande et l'Australie mais la France estime que la Communaute ne doit pas aller au-dela de l'engagement general, auquel elle a souscrit dans le cadre du GATT, selon lequel les aides a l'exportation ne peuvent pas etre utilisees pour obtenir une part plus qu'equitable du marche mondial. Un autre probleme, pose par la France, concerne les echanges internes de viande congelee neo-zelandaise. Ce pays craint que cette viande ne bouleverse son marche et demande a pouvoir l'exclure en cas de besoin.

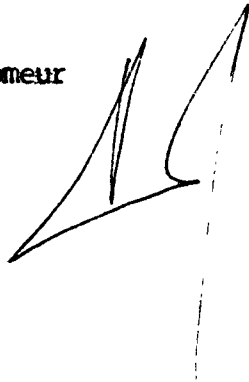
2. BEURRE NEO-ZELANDAIS

Les ministres essayeront d'eliminer un probleme qu'ils croyaient deja avoir regle avant les vacances : celui du prelevement special a l'importation de beurre neo-zelandais. La Nouvelle-Zelande avait marque son accord sur la reduction, de 115.000 a 95.000 tonnes, de ses exportations vers la Communaute beneficiant d'un prelevement preferentiel. En contre-partie, la Communaute devait reduire le prelevement de telle facon que les recettes nettes pour la Nouvelle-Zelande augmenteraient de 50 % a 75 % du prix d'intervention communautaire. Le resultat de ce calcul donnait un prelevement de 25,18 ECU/100 kg, ce qui a ete bloque par la delegation francaise qui souhaite un montant d'au moins 30 ECU. Les ministres parleront egalement du regime d'importations pour le beurre neo-zelandais a partir de 1981, mais ce dossier n'est pas encore mur. Bien que toutes les delegations acceptent la continuation d'un regime preferentiel au-dela de 1980, la duree, les quantites et les autres modalites de ce regime posent encore des problemes.

3. AUTRES POINTS

Outre les hormones, les ministres reprendront les problèmes posés par la tarification spéciale du gaz naturel néerlandais pour l'horticulture sous serres. La Commission a demandé des explications au Gouvernement néerlandais en application de l'article 93, paragraphe 1, du Traité, et elle entretiendra le Conseil de la réponse néerlandaise. M. Gundelach a enfin l'intention de présenter au Conseil les propositions de la Commission pour le futur régime dans le secteur du sucre (quotas à la production, cotisations, etc.). Ces propositions seront probablement adoptées par la Commission par une procédure écrite qui se terminera mardi prochain. Nous vous informerons du contenu dès que possible.

Amitiés,
M. Santarelli comeur

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Santarelli', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Bruxelles, le 1 octobre 1980

Note BIC (80) 376 (SUITE 1 ET FIN) aux Bureaux Nationaux
c.c. aux membres du groupe du Porte-Parole

CONSEIL AGRICOLE (Klaus van der Pas)

-1. HORMONES : Les ministres se sont mis d'accord pour rechercher une harmonisation des législations concernant l'utilisation d'hormones dans les élevages et pour introduire des règles communautaires concernant le contrôle des résidus dans les viandes. La Commission fera bientôt des propositions et l'on espère que le Conseil pourra statuer avant la fin de l'année.

-2. VIANDE OVINE : Un accord a pu être réalisé tant en ce qui concerne le régime communautaire que les accords d'auto-limitation avec les pays tiers. Le régime entrera en vigueur le 20 octobre.

-3. BEURRE NEZ-ZÉLANDAIS : La France a levé sa réserve concernant le prélèvement spécial applicable aux importations en 1980. Il sera de 25,18 ECU/100 kg comme prévu dans le compromis de la Commission. La Nouvelle Zélande n'enverra pas plus de 95.000 tonnes, ce qui représente une réduction de 20.000 tonnes.

-4. HORTICULTURE SOUS SERRE : La Commission poursuit l'examen de la tarification préférentielle du gaz naturel utilisé dans l'horticulture sous serre néerlandaise. Première impression : il s'agit d'une distorsion de concurrence contre laquelle la Commission devra agir.

-5. SUCRE : Présentation sans débat des nouvelles propositions pour le futur régime " sucre". Une information de presse suivra.

-6. BEURRE DE NOËL : En réponse à une demande de la délégation allemande, M. Gundlach a déclaré que la Commission n'a pas l'intention pour l'instant de proposer une nouvelle action " beurre de Noël ". Les stocks d'intervention sont relativement réduits (200.000 tonnes) et le budget est pratiquement épuisé.

-7. CALENDRIER : Conseil agricole informel : 13-14 octobre à Luxembourg ; prochain conseil normal: 20-21 octobre à Luxembourg.

Amitiés,

M. Santarelli comeu



