



The Dairy Telegraph



EDA Information Bulletin, rue Montoyer 14, 1000 Brussels, Tel: 32 2 549 50 41, Fax: 32 2 549 50 49

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Management Committee of 21.02.2008

On export refunds, no changes since the Management Committee of 14 June where all still existing common refunds such as butter, butter oil and cheeses have been set at zero.

At the next Management Committee a list of products for the schoolmilk scheme will be discussed and voted.

Agricultural Council of Ministers meeting

In order to facilitate the debate during the agricultural council of ministers meeting, the Slovenian presidency asked member states two questions: First, to list their three priorities in the health check and second in which way member states would foresee the so-called "soft landing". On this basis an extensive discussion round took place this week. As regards the future of the milk quota systems, a general consensus between the 27 member states seems to be in reach. Only a minority of member states still believe that milk quotas should also be in place after 2015. The real issue is however, how to reach the abolition year. A majority expressed its support for a gradual quota increase; the exact percentage still open but ranging from 5% to 2%. In addition to this increase, also measures such as lowering the superlevy or changing the fat content have been mentioned.

WTO negotiations

Reacting on the latest agriculture working documents circulated by Ambassador Falconer, French agricultural minister Barnier stated that 20 EU member states cannot accept the draft modalities that should form the basis for a final deal. The plan drawn up by the chairman of the agricultural negotiations at the WTO would require the EU to go further than it originally planned. Barnier also said several European heads of state had written to European Commission President Barroso, warning him against accepting the proposals. Nonetheless, Trade Commissioner Mandelson (and lead negotiator on behalf of the EU) said he still had the support of the member states. He added

that the text in agriculture is a good basis for further negotiations but there are a couple of aspects of it which are not acceptable and for which the EU will strongly argue against. WTO Trade ministers are expected to meet in March or April in a last-possibility to achieve a deal. After that the round risks further years of delay or complete collapse as the US heads into presidential elections, followed by the start of a new administration.

EDA policy conference on *trans* fatty acids

During the policy conference organised by EDA on 12th February in Brussels renowned speakers in the field present the state-of-the-art and some very recent research on dairy TFA. Looking at the totality of the data available up to date, the scientists concluded that there is no scientific evidence on negative health effects from TFA of natural origin found in dairy and ruminant meat. EDA therefore stated that dairy TFA should not be taken into consideration for labelling or nutrient profiling for claims. Consumption of dairy products should rather be promoted for their significant contribution to the nutrient supply such as high quality protein and several key minerals and vitamins. A summary report of the meeting will be available shortly.

CIAA public-private partnership on salt reformulation

Last week, CIAA organized a meeting on sodium reformulation with WHO Europe, Commission, UK FSA and CIAA membership. WHO Europe and the Commission are calling for the EU to take action on sodium reformulation as part of the EU nutrition strategy and aim to actively engage industry on the discussions. CIAA presented challenges of this project already identified within CIAA membership (e.g. intake baseline data, assessment of reformulation already carried out, technological limitations...). The presentations of WHO Europe, Commission, UK FSA and CIAA are available on the member's area of EDA website. A summary report will follow shortly.