

Agricultural products: information and promotion on the internal market and the third countries

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The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development adopted the report by Bogdan **GOLIK** (PES, PL) amending, under the consultation procedure, the proposal for a Council regulation on information provision and promotion measures for agricultural products on the internal market and in third countries.

The main amendments adopted by the committee are as follows:

- the committee stated that criteria should be set for selecting themes, markets and potential export opportunities concerned by the Community programmes, particularly with regard to those carried out in third countries;
- information and promotion measures should include and reflect in the best possible way the attributes of the European production model - the richness, variety and tradition of the Community's agri-foodstuffs culture;
- the Commission should promote collaboration with the Member States on measures that it launches on its own initiative, thereby increasing Community added value;
- it would be appropriate to devise and include in the programmes information and support measures for the professional organisations taking part in them;
- in view of the rapid process of internationalisation to which the Community agri-foodstuffs industry is subject, MEPs stated that it would be appropriate to provide for flexible application of the promotion and information instruments, and to make the legislative amendments needed in the light of the experience acquired since 1999;
- bearing in mind that, especially in third countries, the promotional measures introduced should foster access to European products for consumers, and also bearing in mind that the organisations cofinance a substantial percentage of the programmes, the participating proposing organisations should be able to present their products at commercial events, such as trade and other fairs, in order to show the richness, quality and variety of the Community products available;
- information and promotion measures for fruit and vegetable products should be strengthened;
- there is a need to emphasise the numerous advantages of regional and local products for the environment and the labour market;
- the Commission (and not the Member States) shall define the specifications setting the conditions and evaluation criteria for information and promotion measures;
- priority shall be given only to the programmes carried out on third country markets and within these measures particularly to programmes that are proposed by several Member States or providing for measures in several Member States;

- the Community's financial participation in the programmes selected shall not exceed 60% of the actual cost of these programmes (50% in the proposal). However, in the case of programmes related to organic farming and programmes dealing with measures taken as a result of crisis situations, the level of the Community's financial participation to such programmes shall not exceed 70%. Proposing organisations shall participate in the funding of the programmes they propose to a level of at least 10% of the actual costs of the programmes (instead of 20% in the proposal);

- the report stated that provisions should be made for a proper distinction between the implementing measures related to technical issues of acceptance of projects submitted by proposing organisations and issues related to strategic approach with regard to market outlet studies and export opportunities. In the first case, the management procedure should be used, whereas, in the second case, since the choice of export strategy maintains certain aspects of political importance, the regulatory procedure should be applied;

- before 31 December 2010, the Commission shall submit to the European Parliament and the Council a report on the application of this Regulation, together with any appropriate proposals.

MEPs also underlined that the inclusion of the promotion measure in the framework of the single CMO regulation (see [CNS/2006/0269](#)) would be in line with the simplification process and would lead to the transparency of all the market instruments available for the operators, market management mechanisms and promotion possibilities.