

DRAFT

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WORKING
PARTY ON QUALITY ASSURANCE IN AGRICULTURE
(AQA) OF 17TH FEBRUARY 2014**

PRESENT: De Carné, Benvenuti, Coppola, Martin, Eramo, Börger, Basto, Vagni,
Strazdina, Jochum, Matafome, Mateos, Vadász, Tozzi, Cloye, Mira,
Syvaniemi, Barclay, Clarke, Nielsen, Matousek, Kärner

SECRETARIAT: Di Rubbo, Valle

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

Items 1 and 2: Adoption of the agenda and the minutes of the last meeting

→ The working party, chaired by Mr Olivier DE CARNÉ, convened and adopted the agenda [AQA\(14\)318 \(rev.2\)](#) and the minutes from the last working party meeting [AQA\(14\)1034 \(rev.1\)](#) and Advisory Group [AQA\(14\)220 \(rev.1\)](#)

Item 3: Preparation for the meeting of the Advisory Group on “Quality of Agriculture production”

→ 3.1) Presentation of the Strategic Agenda of the Advisory Group for 2014/2015

- The chair of the Advisory Group, Mr Giulio Benvenuti presented the content of the 2014-2015 Strategic agenda of the Advisory Group on the Quality of agriculture production [AQA\(14\)1051 \(rev.1\)](#).

→ 3.2) Regulation N° 1151/2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs:

- State of play of [AQA\(14\)4421 \(rev.1\)](#):

a) Draft implementing act laying down rules for the application of Regulation No 1151/2012 and b) Draft horizontal delegated act supplementing Regulation No 1151/2012:

- The chair gave the floor to the Secretariat that informed the members of the content of both texts. The delegated act was adopted in December 2013 and was notified to the European Parliament and Council that can present their objection (deadline: 19th April). One of the main issues in the text concerns the derogation to use animal feedstuffs sourced out of the geographical area in the case of PDO of animal origin. It shall in no case exceed 50% of dry matter on annual basis.

- The chair gave the floor to the experts. It was stressed the importance of clarifying if new rules shall only apply to new applications or also to existing geographical indications. The difference between minor and big amendment was also asked.

c) Draft delegated act with regards to the conditions of use of the optional quality term “mountain product”:

- The secretariat informed members of the current situation. Compared with the last meeting, the draft now established a new derogation in the case of animal feed for pigs. Feedstuffs that cannot be produced in mountain areas shall not exceed 75% as regards pigs. The draft also proposed flexibility to Member States to apply the derogation for processing in the case of milk and milk products.

- The chair gave the floor to the experts that discussed the improvement of the draft compared to the last meetings. Some clarification was still needed regarding the application of derogations, i.e. the possibility to adopt different derogation depending on the type of dairy product.

d) Report on the case for a local farming and direct sales labelling scheme [AQA\(13\)10169 \(rev.1\)](#):

- The chair gave the floor to the Secretariat that explained the content of the report that was finally adopted in December 2013 and sent to the European Parliament and Council. The report reflects on whether existing policy tools and measures are appropriate and provide adequate flexibility to this type of farming and sales. It was also explained that in the framework of the discussions the

Commission sent a list of questions to the European Parliament and Council with several issues to be addressed regarding the instruments to support local agricultural or certain rules such as hygiene or public procurement. This document was also circulated to the Working Party in advance of the meeting.

- The chair gave the floor to the experts that raised some concerns regarding the coexistence between a possible new EU tool and national schemes already in place. It was also stressed the need to have clear definitions, i.e. the definition of “local”. It was agreed that the issues still needed further debate.

e) Report on the case for an optional quality term “product of island farming”:

- The chair gave the floor to the Secretariat that explained the content of the report that was also adopted in December 2013. The report examines the socio-economic implications of island farming and the specificities of agricultural production in islands. To reserve an optional quality term “product of island farming” at EU level could be adequate for some small scale producers. It could also add value if it is integrated with other support measures. Nevertheless, there is also a risk of diluting existing initiatives and penalizing producers already engaged in quality schemes.

- The chair gave the floor to the experts. Some representatives welcomed the report as a way to explore possibilities to enhance island farming.

→ 3.3) Regulation No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers :

- The chair gave the floor to the Secretariat that provided the state of play on this issue using a presentation [AQA\(14\)4422 \(rev.1\)](#) which addressed the different implementing acts and reports.

- Report on milk and milk used as an ingredient in dairy products: The Secretariat explained that in order to draft the report, DG AGRI has called upon Wageningen University to collect data for the Commission to analyse this possibility.

- Report on unprocessed food, single ingredient products and ingredients that represent more than 50% of a food: In this case, DG SANCO has also selected a Consultant to collect the data. Categories are horizontal and the idea is to cover all products focusing on specific ones: wheat flour, rice, fresh cut fruits and vegetables, sugar, vegetable oils, orange juice, tomato puree and wheat flour in bread.

- Both reports have to be done at the end of 2014. They will launch the discussion with European Parliament and Council considering the possibility to establish new rules to inform consumers about the different categories. The chair gave the floor to the experts that stressed their preliminary remarks regarding the issue, i.e. clarification on products chosen to collect the data.

→ 3.4) Presentation of the new CAP focused on « quality related issues » : inclusion of the support measures for quality schemes in the national programs and its implementation

- The Secretariat explained the content of the measure fiche [DR\(13\)7853 \(rev.2\)](#) on article 16 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 on the inclusion of support measures for quality schemes for agricultural products. Some experts raised some concerns about the definition of “group of producers” or the support for information and promotion activities.

→ 3.5) State of play of the discussions on the European Commission’s proposal on official controls (review of regulation (EC) N° 882/2004) and the link to quality certification schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

- The Secretariat provided the state of play of the proposal and explained that the week after, the report was going to be voted in COM-ENVI. A lobbying alert has been sent to the Working Parties. It was stressed the importance of recognizing what operators are doing through private quality certification schemes to avoid double checks.

Item 4: Outcome of the informal discussion after our last Working Party meeting (14:30 to 16:30) in order to identify sustainability schemes with a large scope (environmental, social and economic)

→ The chair explained the outcome ([AQA\(13\)9560 \(rev.1\)](#)) of the informal meeting that was organised with several experts of the Working Party to identify sustainability schemes in some countries with large scope (social, economic and environmental) and to have an exchange of views of the situation in the different Member States. Some of the conclusions of the meeting were that retailers are taking the lead. It is important to consider the incentives for farmers to be part of these schemes if they could represent an alternative in some cases.

Item 5: Proposal for a Regulation on promotion measures for agricultural products focused on quality schemes

→ A very brief update on the proposal was provided due to the lack of time, ([PPA\(14\)817 \(rev.1\)](#), [PPA\(13\)6814 \(rev.1\)](#)).

Item 6: AOB

→ The Chair thanked the members for attending, the interpreters for their work and closed the meeting
