

Council of the European Union



BACKGROUND¹ Brussels, 3 September 2015

AGRICULTURE Council 7 September 2015 in Brussels

This extraordinary Council meeting will address agricultural matters only; it will start at 14.30 on Monday, 7 September 2015. The Council will be chaired by Mr Fernand Etgen Luxembourg's Minister for Agriculture, Viticulture and Consumer Protection.

The Council will be briefed by the Commission on the **development of EU agricultural markets** and the ministers will then have an exchange of views on the situation.

Finally, the Council will take stock of the **African swine fever** outbreak in the Baltic countries and the consequences of the **drought** in Poland.

A press conference will be held at the end of the meeting (+/- 18.00).

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Press conferences and public events by video streaming: <u>http://video.consilium.europa.eu</u> Video coverage in broadcast quality (MPEG4) and photo gallery: <u>www.eucouncil.tv</u>

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¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

AGRICULTURE

Market developments

The Council will be briefed by the Commission on recent agricultural market developments. An exchange of views between ministers will follow (<u>11588/15</u>).

In light of the worrying situation currently faced by several agricultural sectors the Presidency will invite the Commission to update delegations on the state of play and outline a realistic package of measures to address it. The Council will then hold a debate on possible additional measures in the short and medium term on the basis of ideas proposed in the note prepared by the Presidency. Potential solutions should be workable, take due account of national specificities and be in line with the market orientation at the core of the reformed common agricultural policy (CAP). Furthermore, they should be mindful of budgetary constraints.

The 'Agriculture and Fisheries' Council most recently debated the issue of market developments in light of the impact of the Russian import ban on European agriculture most recently at its meeting on 13 July 2015. On that occasion delegations expressed concerns about the trends recorded in a variety of sectors and in particular the dairy, pigmeat and fruit and vegetables sectors. The Commission, while recognising that the Russian ban was not the only cause of the difficult economic situation, announced the extension of the existing market measures for fruit and vegetables and milk.

On 7 August the Commission extended the safety net measures for the fruit and vegetables sector until 30 June 2016 and is expected to do the same for the measures for the dairy sector. The existing measures set to expire on 30 September 2015, consisting of intervention and private storage aid for both butter and skimmed milk powder, will be extended to 29 February 2016.

However, the market situation remains challenging for a number of products . The slump in prices coming on top of the extended Russian embargo, slowing growth in China and other detrimental factors such as the prolonged drought this summer reflects a supply-demand gap in certain sectors and has hit the European farmers hard, putting severe pressure on farm incomes.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

African swine fever

The Council will be briefed by the Estonian delegation supported by Lithuania, Latvia and Poland, on the current state of play of the African swine fever (ASF) outbreak in those countries (<u>11555/15</u>).

ASF is a highly contagious viral disease affecting wild boar and domestic pigs. ASF was first detected in Lithuania and then in Poland at the beginning of 2014. Since then, cases in wild boars and pigs have also been identified in Estonia and Latvia. The member states concerned would like to see the development of a broad, long-term strategy to fight the disease.