Common agricultural policy (CAP): common rules for direct support schemes and certain support schemes for farmers; support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

2007/0177(CNS) - 29/08/2007 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to amend Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003 establishing common rules for direct support schemes under the common agricultural policy and establishing certain support schemes for farmers and Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

PROPOSED ACT: Council Regulation.

CONTENT: in 2003 the Council reached a political agreement on the CAP reform, paving the way for an in-depth reshuffling of the way the EU is granting income support to its farmers and introducing mandatory cross-compliance obligations. In the report to the Council on the implementation of cross-compliance, the Commission has identified some possible specific improvements in terms of efficiency and/or simplification (see the follow-up document in CNS/2003/0006).

The aim of this proposal is to apply from the year 2008 the following specific improvements:

- the conclusion of the Commission report to the Council regarding the phasing-in of the statutory management requirements covered by the cross-compliance obligations in the new Member States that have opted for the single area payment scheme;

- the simplification of the rules for eligibility under both the single payment scheme and the single area payment scheme regarding the time period during which the farmers shall have the land at their disposal;

- the clarification of the farmer's responsibility vis-à-vis cross compliance in case of transfer of land during the calendar year;

- the introduction of a legal basis for the implementation under cross compliance of a de minimis rule for applying reductions and of exemptions from reductions for minor infringements.

Additionally, it is proposed that for all the new Member States opting to differentiate the per unit value of entitlements allocated to hectares of grassland or permanent pasture and of any other eligible hectares in the framework of the single payment scheme, the date referred to for identifying the parcels is established on 30 June 2006 instead of 30 June 2003.

This proposal includes also a modification to the special provisions governing the complementary national direct payments in Cyprus, as a result of the extension of the period for the implementation of the single area payment scheme that was adopted by the Council on 19 December 2006 (see CNS/2006/0172).