Agricultural products: marketing standards

2010/0354(COD) - 18/07/2011 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development adopted the report by Iratxe GARCÍA PÉREZ (S&D, ES) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 as regards marketing standards.

The committee recommends that the European Parliament's position in first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the commission proposal as follows:

Optional reserved terms: Members want the specific provisions relating to optional reserved terms and all articles and recitals relating to these terms and to marketing standards, as well as Annex II to be removed from the proposal on product quality schemes and moved to this proposal, so as to integrate all optional reserved terms in the Single CMO.

Conformity with the general marketing standard: in order to resolve the problems faced by small-scale producers in meeting Union marketing standards, the Commission shall, by 30 September 2012, present a report accompanied, if appropriate, by legislative proposals creating appropriate simplified marketing standards for local animal breeds and plant varieties that are used and produced by small-scale producers.

Member States may also:

- adopt or maintain national provisions on aspects of marketing which are not specifically harmonised;

- adopt or maintain national rules on marketing standards for sectors or products to which the general marketing standard applies, provided that those rules are in compliance with Union law and with the rules on the functioning of the single market.

Delegated powers concerning general marketing standard: the Commission shall adopt delegated acts concerning rules relating to the conditions for implementing and monitoring, taking into account the need to avoid lowering the general marketing standard to the point where the quality of European products starts to decline.

The Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts concerning the marketing standards by sector or product, as well as derogations and exemptions from the application of such standards, only for a limited period and in exceptional cases, in order to adapt to the constantly changing market conditions.

Marketing standards shall be revised only if all the groups concerned (which include farmers, processors, traders and consumers) benefit from the revision and the additional costs are not borne by producers alone.

Establishment of marketing standards: Members want to specify that these standards must be established taking into account:

- the interest of consumers to receive adequate and transparent product information, after conducting an impact assessment covering inter alia the costs and administrative burdens for operators, as well as the benefits offered to producers and the end consumer;

- the need to preserve of the natural and essential characteristics of products and to avoid causing a substantial change in the composition of the product concerned.

Third countries: in order to take account of the specificities in trade between the Union and certain third countries and of the special character of some agricultural products and to ensure that consumers are not misled as a result of their established expectations and perceptions, measures may be adopted acting in accordance with the **ordinary legislative procedure** to define the conditions under which imported products are considered as providing an equivalent level of compliance with the Union requirements concerning marketing standards.

Role of groups: in order to improve and stabilise the operation of the market in products that have been assigned a protected designation of origin or a protected geographical indication pursuant to the Regulation on agricultural product quality schemes, producer Member States may lay down marketing rules to regulate supply, in particular by implementing decisions taken by the groups.

Pig meat, sheep meat and goat meat: Members ask the Commission to report by 31 December 2012, on the possibilities of establishing specific standards for pigmeat, sheepmeat and goatmeat.

Alignment with the Lisbon Treaty: the report makes several amendments in order r to reflect the common understanding reached between the institutions on the use of delegated acts, as well as the entry into force of the Regulation No (EU) 182/2011 on implementing acts.