EU/Norway Agreement: additional trade preferences in agricultural products

2010/0243(NLE) - 08/11/2011 - Final act

PURPOSE: to conclude an Agreement in the form of the Exchange of Letters between the EU and Norway concerning additional trade preferences in agricultural products reached on the basis of Article 19 of the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA).

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision 2011/818/EU on the conclusion of the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters between the European Union and the Kingdom of Norway concerning additional trade preferences in agricultural products reached on the basis of Article 19 of the Agreement on the European Economic Area.

BACKGROUND: Article 19 of the Agreement on the European Economic Area foresees that the contracting parties undertake to continue their efforts with a view to achieving progressive liberalisation of agricultural trade between them.

In accordance with Council Decision 2010/676/EU, the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters between the European Union and the Kingdom of Norway concerning additional trade preferences in agricultural products reached on the basis of Article 19 of the Agreement on the European Economic Area was signed on 15 April 2011, subject to its conclusion.

It is now appropriate to approve this Agreement.

CONTENT: with this Decision, the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters between the EU and Norway concerning additional trade preferences in agricultural products reached on the basis of Article 19 of the Agreement on the European Economic Area is hereby approved on behalf of the Union.

The objective is to make provision for further liberalisation of agricultural trade.

The new preferences will consist in additional full liberalisation for some sensitive products, thus allowing some 60% of agricultural trade between Norway and the European Union to be completely free.

For more sensitive products such as:

- meat,
- dairy,
- fruit,
- vegetables and
- ornamental plants,
- tariff quotas or tariff reductions have been agreed upon.

Specific provisions are foreseen as regards the management of tariff rate quotas for cheese.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: the Decision shall enter into force on 8/11/2011. The date of entry into force of the Agreement will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union by the General Secretariat of the Council.