Agricultural products on the internal market and in third countries: information provision and promotion measures

2013/0398(COD) - 15/04/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 557 votes to 103 with 12 abstentions a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on information provision and promotion measures for agricultural products on the internal market and in third countries.

Parliament adopted its position at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure. The amendments adopted in plenary were the result of a compromise between Parliament and Council. They amend the Commission's proposal as follows:

Objectives: Parliament and Council agreed to clarify that Information provision and promotion measures should **enhance the competitiveness** of the agricultural sector. More specifically, the measures should:

- aim to increase consumers' awareness about the merits of the Union's agricultural products and recognition of EU quality schemes;
- increasing the competitiveness and consumption of EU agricultural products and certain food products and raise their profile both within and outside the Union;
- increasing awareness and recognition of Union quality schemes;
- increasing the market share of EU agricultural products and certain food products, with a specific focus on those markets in third countries with the highest growth potential;
- restoring normal market conditions in the event of a serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems.

Information provision and promotion measures: as Members had proposed, the amended text kept **one class of action** that might be financed inside and outside the EU. This should be aimed at:

- stressing the (i) specific features of agricultural production methods in the Union, particularly in terms of food safety, traceability, authenticity, labelling, nutritional and health aspects, animal welfare, respect for the environment and sustainability, and (ii) the characteristics of agricultural and food products, particularly in terms of quality, taste, diversity or traditions;
- raising awareness about the authenticity of European protected designations of origin, protected geographical indication and traditional specialities guaranteed.

Those measures should consist notably in **public relation work and information campaigns** and may also take the form of participation in events, fairs and exhibitions of national, European and international importance.

Characteristics of the measures: information provision and promotion measures **must not be brand-oriented or be origin-oriented.** Nevertheless, in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of

demonstrations, tastings and information and promotion material, it should be possible to mention the product brand and origin, provided that the principle of non-discrimination is respected and the measures are not aimed at encouraging the consumption of any product on the sole ground of its origin.

Eligible products: as regards **wine**, only wine with designation of origin or protected geographical indication status and wine carrying an indication of the wine grape variety should be the subject of the information provision and promotion measures.

The eligibility of **fishery and aquaculture products** listed in Annex 1 to Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013, for the information provision and promotion measures provided for under this scheme, should be limited solely to fishery and aquaculture products which are associated with another agricultural or food product.

Also eligible will be: (i) products covered by Union quality schemes and quality schemes recognised by Member States; (ii) the **organic production** method,(iii) the **logo for quality agricultural products specific to the outermost regions.**

The Commission will adopt delegated acts with the aim of **supplementing the list** of eligible products in accordance with market perspectives.

Types of actions: measures shall be implemented in the context of information and promotion programmes and Commission initiatives. Programmes should consist of **a coherent set of operations** and shall be implemented over a period of at least one year but not more than three years.

In order to increase the number of measures proposed and improve their quality, the co-legislators **widened the range of beneficiaries** to include producer organisations, groups and bodies of the agrifood sector whose objective and activity is to provide information on and promote agricultural products.

Commission work programme: the annual work programme adopted by the Commission must set out the operational objectives. The work programme should provide, among others, for specific arrangements in order to react in the event of a **serious market disturbance** or loss of consumer confidence.

Financial provisions: the Union's financial contribution to simple programmes should be **70 %** of the eligible expenditure on the internal market and **80%** in third countries.

The percentage contributed by the Union in the event of a serious disruption to the market, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems should **be 85 %.**

Technical support services: as proposed by Members, the services developed by the Commission should encourage awareness of different markets, including the financing of exploratory business meetings, maintaining a dynamic professional network around information and promotion policy, and **advice to the sector** with regard to the threat of imitation and counterfeit products in third countries.

Report: by 31 December 2018, the Commission shall submit an interim report on the application of the Regulation, including the rate of uptake in different Member States, together with any appropriate proposals.