EU/Norway agreement: additional trade preferences in agricultural products

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The Committee on International Trade adopted the report by Tiziana BEGHIN (EFDD, IT) on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of an 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.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament **give its consent** to the conclusion of the agreement.

As stated in the explanatory statement accompanying the recommendation, the proposed agreement will offer **new trade opportunities** for EU exporters and deepen trade relations between the EU and Norway. It seeks to increase the degree of liberalisation further, enlarging the current tariff rate quotas, opening new tariff rate quotas for additional agricultural products and addressing certain pending trade irritants.

Under the new agreement, both parties agreed to **mutually grant duty free access to 36 new tariff lines**. These include live horses, certain animal products and types of offal, plants, vegetables for feed purposes, provisionally preserved vegetables, fruit, berries and nuts, algae, certain sugars, fruit juices and fermented beverages.

Norway is the **EU's 7th most important partner** for trade in goods. While Norway's overall trade with the EU shows a surplus, in trade of basic agricultural products balance is much in favour of the EU, with the EU exports in 2016 reaching EUR 2 495 million against EUR 307 million imports from Norway.

The agreement represents a **step towards engaging on liberalising agricultural trade between the EU and Norway further**, in particular trade in processed agricultural products which is hindered by high customs tariffs in Norway and towards resuming negotiations on geographical indications.