

Rice: reform of the common organisation of the market COM

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Pending the European Parliament's opinion, the Council held a discussion on the Commission proposals, introduced by an interim report presented by the Chairman of the Special Committee on Agriculture (SCA). On the basis of that report, examination of the proposals focused for the moment on the following aspects: - intervention arrangements for rice; - standard quality criteria; - sanctions if the maximum guaranteed area is exceeded. A number of suggestions put to the SCA concerning these issues aimed at progressing in the discussions were generally well received. The Commission representative, while emphasising the existing constraints that had to be taken into account in reforming this sector, stated his willingness to contribute to finding ways to enable a decision to be taken on the matter. After the discussion, the Council instructed the SCA to continue discussions so that it could take a decision on the matter as soon as the European Parliament's opinion was received.