A support system of producers of certain arable crops: durum wheat (amend. Regul. 1765/92 /EEC)

1996/0221(CNS) - 27/05/1997

The committee unanimously adopted the report by Francesco BALDARELLI (PES, I) on the amendment of the regulation establishing a support system for producers of durum wheat. This amendment was necessary to ensure adequate production to supply the user industries (pasta products and meal) and to cut budgetary expenditure. The Commission had proposed fixing a maximum guaranteed area by producer Member State entitled to the supplement to the compensatory payment. In view of the sharp fall in the rate of compulsory set-aside from 15% to 5%, the committee on agriculture believed there should be a 5% across-the-board increase in these guaranteed areas. Each Member State would create a 5% reserve to be used to provide incentives for young farmers wanting to set up as durum wheat producers. For Portugal, the report asked for a higher increase from the 35 000 ha proposed by the Commission to 90 000 ha since aid for durum wheat was only introduced for Portugal in 1991. Another proposal from the Commission was the compulsory use of certified seed. However, the committee on agriculture asked that small farmers be left the option of using non-certified seed in order to maintain biodiversity and proposed "incentives for the direct production of certified seed by producers' associations by means of funding for such a measure".