Olive oil: extension of the period of validity of aid scheme and quality strategy

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The committee adopted the report by Salvador JOVE PERES (EUL/NGL, E) amending the proposal under the consultation procedure. The committee wanted improved monitoring, controls and checks (including the introduction of computerised systems) on quantities produced and processed and on production aid. It rejected the Commission's vague concept of "operators' organisations" and insisted that legal concepts used widely under the CAP, namely producers' organisations, associations of such organisations and interbranch organisations, should be used. It also said that "olive oil" must be what it seemed and should not be adulterated with other oils or fats. It wanted a ban on the marketing of blends of olive oil and other oils or fats to stop consumers being misled and to prevent fraud. The committee objected to the Commission's proposal to use the term "standard olive oil" to replace the current catch-all description "olive oil", which was used to denote blends of refined olive oil and virgin olive oil and could give the false impression to consumers that such blends were the best olive oil. It said that the term "standard" erred in the opposite direction, appearing to exclude higher-quality virgin oils. The committee therefore preferred the more accurate term "blended olive oil". It also felt that the term "crude olive oil" conjured up images of the petroleum industry, and proposed that it be replaced by the term "natural olive oil".