Sheepmeat and goatmeat: common organisation of the market CMO, reform

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PURPOSE :to present a proposal on the common organisation of the market in sheepmeat and goatmeat. CONTENT : following an evaluation undertaken by the Commission it is proposed to carry out a reform of the common organisation of the market in sheepmeat and goatmeat. Although, in terms of production, the sheep and goat sector is the least important of the meat sectors (less than 10% of pigmeat production or around 12% of beef and veal production) the rearing of sheep and goats is very sensitive for certain regions of the Community. It is particularly for the less-favoured areas (LFA). It is by nature a predominatly extensive form of farming. The Community is not self-sufficient in sheepmeat. About 20% of the overall consumption is imported, in the framework of the duty free quotas. The proposal aims to retain certain aspects of the regime, which have proven to be effective in maintaining a balance of the market, such as the producers' individual limits of premium rights. However, in the interests of simplification and transparency the sum of individual limits per Member State will be published in the regulation. It is not proposed to replace individual limits by regional quotas. The certainty for producers, which would be achieved by a flat-rate premium, would be undermined by the need to established a mechanism whereby the premium would be reduced in the case of overshooting of the quota. Regional quotas also encourage speculative activity that is harmful to the stability of the sector. It is proposed that the differentiation in the level of the premium between producers of meat and those marketing milk and milk products to be maintained. This recognises that milk producers enjoy an additional source of income. However, by way of simplification and in order to provide a uniform basis to all producers in less favoured areas it is proposed to established a single rate for the supplementary premium payable to such producers. Moreover, it includes proposals to make a number of simplifications to the regulations. Six Council regulations are to be replaced by a single regulation and definitions and other basic provisions made clearer. For example, it is proposed to align the definitions of 'producer' and 'holding' with those established in the Integrated Administration and Control System and remove superfluous provisions from the text. The level of the premium that is proposed is EUR 21 with a reduced amount of EUR 16,8 for sheep farmers who produce sheep's milk and goat farmers. It is proposed to set the supplementary premium at EUR 7 for all producers. It should however be added that the recent outbreak of foot and mouth disease in a number of Member States has revealed important shortcomings in the traceability of movements of sheep. It is the Commission's intention to carry out a thorough review of the means to ensuring that these shortcomings are fully addressed. Options which will be considered include improved measures for the permanent identification of sheep, possibly including individual ear-tags or other forms of identification (e.g. electronic). Suchmeasures would offer the added advantage of improved information and controls on premia, protection against fraudulent claims, and rapid tracing back to the farm(s) of origin.