Organic production: traceability, indications on agricultural products and foodstuffs (amend. Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91)

2003/0002(CNS) - 16/01/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to amend Regulation 2092/91/EEC on organic foodstuffs. CONTENT : Council Regulation 2092/913/EEC provides for a harmonised framework for the labelling, production and inspection of agricultural products, which bear indications referring to the organic production method. The following amendments are made: - the Regulation already provides for Community-wide protection of certain terms used to indicate to consumers that a food or feed product, or its ingredients, have been obtained in accordance with the organic production method laid down in that Regulation. That protection also applies to the usual derivatives or diminutives of those terms. The relevant article is amended in order to remove any possibility of misinterpretation as regards the scope of the protection. - the Regulation also provides that operators producing or importing products from third countries are subject to an inspection system. In recent years, some products bearing indications referring to the organic production method have been placed on the market without complying with Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91. Moreover, contamination with herbicides has occurred recently during the storage of products from organic farming. The inspection system is reinforced. All operators throughout the production and the preparation process are made subject to the inspection system. However, retailers not carrying out any operation on the product and selling it directly to the final consumer in sealed packaging are not subject to the inspection system. - in order to respect the obligation of professional secrecy, the inspection authorities are required not to disclose information they obtain. However, the exchange of information is to be allowed between inspection authorities in order to improve traceability and to guarantee compliance with the provisions of Regulation 2092/91/EEC throughout the production and preparation process. - since the Community logo indicating that products are covered by the specific inspection scheme may be used for products imported from third countries, the proposal provides, for reasons of clarity, that equivalent inspection requirements are to be applied to those products.