Fruit and vegetables: changes to and the future of the Community policy

1994/2115(COS) - 17/02/1995 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted the report by Mr Miguel Arias Canete on changes to and the future of Community policy in the fruit and vegetable sector. It endorsed the Commission's analysis that, on balance, the COM had worked well but was sure that the Commission was aware of the recurrence of old problems which arose at regular intervals in this sector without any solutions being adopted. Parliament also: - felt that the Commission communication did not contain an adequate guarantee as regards maintaining the level of producers' incomes, financial solidarity or the Community preference; - reaffirmed that the sector could only be maintained and developed in the face of the constant erosion of the Community preference if the public sector introduced incentives and adequate financial support; - felt that the Commission should implement a programme to improve statistics on the production and importation of fruit and vegetables in the Community; - called for an end to the endless dismantling of the Community preference, especially as regards imports from countries with which the Union has concluded or intends to conclude preferential commercial agreements; - called for support for fresh "small products" for processing, which were very important at regional or local level (dried fruit, asparagus etc.), and were not protected by market support mechanisms or entry prices; - felt that regional plans were needed in order to rationalise the sector and could, by way of exception, include direct aid or compensation for lost income; - felt that standardisation in the place of origin should be compulsory and should apply in all Member States and to all products. Standardisation should be accompanied by better labelling of fresh and processed fruit; - called for the Commission to recognise, define and encourage interprofessions with a regional or sectoral (product) basis; - stressed the need, in relation to external aspects, for a system which the Commission could use to calculate the average price per origin and per product at representative market level; in addition, rules should be defined with a view to introducing a system for auditing the accounts and checking the invoices of enterprises; - felt that there should be a more flexible definition of processed products based on the same initial product; - felt that Community regulations were needed stating which plant health and other products were allowed during the production, canning and processing of fruit and vegetables and admissible residue limits; - called, given the Union's lack of quality juices, for support measures for citrus juices to be maintained and for new support measures for fresh juices (especially apple, pear, peach and apricot juice) to be introduced; - called for a real Community inspection agency and for the deterrent value of sanctions to be stepped up; - called on the Commission to ensure that the COM promoted the diversity of species and current varieties of fruit and vegetables.