Bananas: common organisation of the market COM (amend. Regulation (EEC) No 404/93). Recommendation for a decision included

1998/0013(CNS) - 20/07/1998 - Final act

OBJECTIVE: to amend Regulation (EEC) No 404/93 on the COM in bananas with a view to brining Community rules into line with the Union's commitments in the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO). COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council Regulation (EC) No 1637/98 amending Regulation (EEC) No 404/93 on the common organization of the market in bananas. CONTENT: in September 1997, the dispute settlement body of the WTO found that some of the EU's provisions on the market organization for bananas infringed WTO rules. This regulation therefore seeks to amend the basic regulation to bring it into line with the WTO conclusions in the following areas: - maintaining the tariff quota at its current level of 2.2 million tonnes with a customs duty of ECU 75 per tonne; - setting a supplementary autonomous tariff quota of 353,000 tonnes together with a duty of ECU 75 per tonne for imports from non-ACP suppliers and zero duty for ACP suppliers in order to take account of the accession to the Community of Finland, Sweden and Austria; - maintaining the maximum quantity for traditional imports from the ACP countries at its current level of 857,700 tonnes at zero duty; - raising the tariff preference for non-traditional ACP suppliers to ECU 200 per tonne; - setting a single criterion for determining the producer states with a substantial interest in the supply of bananas so that tariff quotas and, where applicable, the traditional ACP quantity can be distributed. Provision is also made for the Commission to allocate the tariff quotas on the basis of the same criterion if it is not possible to reach agreement with the countries in question. Provision has also been made to amend the autonomous tariff quota of 353,000 tonnes in order to take account of the increase in Community demand identified in a supply balance sheet. A new provision has also been included so that specific measures can be adopted in order to deal with exceptional circumstances which affect demand on the Community market. Finally, the regulation makes provision for a report on the operation of the overall scheme to be presented to the European Parliament and the Council by 31 December 2004. It should be noted that another text has been adopted to support the measures introduced in the present regulation on aid to traditional ACP banana suppliers (cf. SYN980014). ENTRY INTO FORCE: 31 July 1998. The regulation will apply from 1 January 1999.