

# Agenda 2000: direct support schemes to farmers under the common agricultural policy

1998/0113(CNS) - 17/05/1999 - Final act

**PURPOSE:** the Regulation seeks to lay down common rules for direct support schemes under the common agricultural policy (CAP) and incorporates the Agenda 2000 guidelines. **COMMUNITY MEASURE:** Council Regulation 1259/99/EC establishing common rules for direct support schemes under the common agricultural policy. **CONTENT:** This horizontal Regulation applies to the various market organisations that provide for support to be granted to farmers in the form of direct payments (arable crops, potato starch, cereals, olive oil, grain legumes, flax, hemp, silk worms, bananas, dried grapes, tobacco, seeds, hops, rice, beef and veal, milk and milk products, sheepmeat and goatmeat, the agrimonetary arrangements, Poseidom, Poseima, Poseican and the Aegean Islands). Under the Regulation, Member States, when granting direct aid, can take account of environmental issues by making the grant subject to: - agri-environmental undertakings; - general mandatory environmental requirements; - specific environmental requirements constituting a condition for direct payments. Member States will need to decide on the consequences in the case of environmental requirements not being observed. They are able to introduce measures whereby they can reduce or even cancel benefits accruing from support schemes where environmental requirements are not respected. These measures should be taken by Member States notwithstanding the possibility of granting aid in return for optional environmental commitments. Member States are also authorised to reduce direct payments to farmers in cases where the labour force used on their holding falls short of limits to be determined and/or where the overall prosperity of holdings and/or the total amounts of payments rise above limits to be decided by the Member States. However, in order to maintain agricultural productivity, in particular, such reductions should not exceed 20% of the total amount of the payments. The funds that become available to Member States because farmers fail to comply with the environmental requirements and employment limits may be used as additional Community support for rural development (early retirement, less-favoured areas and areas subject to environmental constraints, agri-environmental measures, reforestation). **ENTRY INTO FORCE:** 26/06/1999. The Regulation is applicable from 01/01/2000.