



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 26 January 2012**

**5793/12**

**PE 16  
AGRI 48**

**NOTE**

---

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| from:    | General Secretariat of the Council   |
| to:      | Delegations  |
| Subject: | Summary of the meeting of the <b>Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI)</b> of the European Parliament, held in Brussels on 24 January 2012 |

---

The meeting was chaired by Mr de Castro (S&D, IT), the chairman of the Committee.

**Exchange of view with Mette Gjerskov, Danish Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, President in office of the Council on the programme of the Danish Presidency (point 10 of the agenda)**

In her introduction to the priorities of the Danish Presidency, Minister Mette Gjerskov explained that the general aim of the Danish Presidency was to work for a responsible, dynamic, green and safer Europe in order to prepare for future economic, social and environmental challenges.

Ms Gjerskov emphasized that green and sustainable growth was an important point on the Danish Presidency's agenda and vital to Europe's future prosperity, including the area of employment. She added that the agricultural sector played an significant role in creating green growth.

With regard to more specific issues concerning agriculture, Ms Gjerskov mentioned the intensive ongoing debate on the Commission's proposals on the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). She confirmed that this dossier would also be one of the main priorities on the agenda of the Danish Presidency, and that several discussions at ministerial level were already planned. She hoped to be able to conclude the first part of the work by presenting a progress report on this subject in June 2012.

In connection with the reform of the CAP, Ms Gjerskov highlighted the following priorities of the Danish Presidency:

- creating a simplified Common Agricultural Policy;
- increasing the importance of implementing greening measures;
- ensuring a positive contribution to environmental protection and the fight against climate change;
- intensifying cooperation between agricultural policy and other EU policy areas, particularly trade and development policies.

With regard to the alignment of agricultural legislation with the Lisbon Treaty she hoped to find a fair and balanced horizontal approach in order to ensure that the institutions involved could fully devote themselves to the work on the reform proposals.

The Minister also mentioned the importance of the continuation of the work on the food quality package which in her view benefited not only European citizens but also helped increase the diversity and quality of EU agricultural production.

In the context of Animal Welfare Ms Gjerskov highlighted two dossiers which would also be carefully examined during the Danish Presidency:

- the Commission's report on the protection of animals during transport; and
- the Commission's Communication on the European Union Strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2011-2015.

Furthermore, the Presidency together with the Commission intends to organize a Conference on Animal Welfare in Brussels on 29 February and 1 March 2012.

Finally, Ms Gjerskov also mentioned that both the question of organic production as well as the Commission's Action Plan against the rising threats from Antimicrobial Resistance would form part of the Danish Presidency's priorities.

Following the presentation of the priorities, a considerable number of committee members asked the Minister questions which *inter alia* related to the following areas:

- a) problems concerning the implementation of regulations on Animal Welfare (Mr Lyon (ALDE, UK), Mr Nicholson (ECR, UK), Mr Häusling (Greens/EFA, DE), Mr Jahr (EPP, DE) and Ms Jeggle (EPP, DE));
- b) concrete actions to be taken to facilitate the implementation of greening measures (Mr Häusling (Greens/EFA, DE), Mr Dorfmann (EPP, IT) Herranz-Garcia (EPP, ES)); and
- c) reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (Ms Dodds (NI, UK) Ms Reimers (ALDE, DE), Mr Jahr (EPP, DE), Mr Dorfmann (EPP, IT)).

The President of the Council considered that in times of economic crisis new and modern solutions would have to be found to contribute to maintaining progress. Ms Gjerskov strongly believed that one of the determining elements for Europe's future lied in assuring high quality products, establishing high standards of animal welfare and investing in innovation and sustainability. At the same time she stressed that small regional production had to be maintained.

She reminded the committee that farmers make a valuable contribution to society. In her view farmers were able to move forward and to adapt to new situations but she also added that at times of change sufficient support had to be ensured for them.

In connection with the implementation of regulations on Animal Welfare the Minister emphasized that non-compliance could not be tolerated and legal action had to be taken against non-compliant countries. At the same time she believed that a more gradual implementation procedure in future regulations would allow Member States to improve their management of the process and make, if necessary, adjustments to it.

Concerning the discussion on the reform of the CAP, Ms Gjerskov indicated that a discussion in March on the redistribution of the financial support was foreseen. She added that this discussion would include re-distribution both under pillar I and II of the reform package since these two pillars were closely connected. The Minister also said that she was open to discuss the possibility of extending the scope of greening measures defined under pillar I of the reform. With a wider scope and more possibilities to choose from she hoped to better meet the particular needs of the 27 countries of the EU.

Concluding her presentation the Ms Gjerskov stressed in particular that she was open to new ideas, suggestions and dialogue, and that she would always make the effort to find common solutions.

---