



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**NOTE**

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from :	General Secretariat
to :	Delegations
Subject :	Update on compliance with the Directive 2008/120/EC in the Member States in view of the implementation of group housing of sows by 1 January 2013 and future initiatives - Information from the Commission

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Delegations will find attached an information note from the Commission to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 18-19 June 2012.

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**Information from the Commission services on the "Update on compliance with the Pig Directive in the Member States in view of the implementation of group housing of sows by 1 January 2013"**

Council Directive 2008/120/EC on the protection of pigs requires that sows and gilts (immature female pigs) are kept in groups during part of their pregnancy in all pig holdings keeping 10 sows or more from 1 January 2013.

The original Council Directive 91/630/EEC on the protection of pigs and its subsequent amendments were codified for clarity by Council Directive 2008/120/EC. The amendment requiring to keep sows in groups was adopted in 2001 and thus provided a long enough transitional period for the pig sector to adapt.

Member States are primarily responsible for the implementation of Council Directive 2008/120/EC.

Six months before the deadline of 1 January 2013, the Commission intends to remind Member States again of their responsibility to ensure the proper implementation of group housing of sows as foreseen by Council Directive 2008/120/EC.

The Commission has informed Member States on the state of compliance with the Directive in several occasions, including during the last AGRI Council in April 2012.

However, due to the continuous evolution of the situation, the Commission will present an update of the current state of implementation of group housing of sows across the EU, based on the data received by Member States; the forecasts of the Member States for the future state of implementation by 31 December 2012 will also be presented.

The Commission intends to highlight again to Member States the importance to urgently take all necessary measures to ensure compliance with Council Directive 2008/120/EC in order to avoid unfair competition between EU pig producers.

The Commission will recall Member States of the importance to continue to provide transparent and harmonized data on the implementation of group housing of sows so Commission services can assess the situation, in particular on aspects relevant to the functioning of the internal market.

The Commission will confirm to Member States its preparedness to launch infringement proceedings as of January 2013, if they do not comply with the Directive. In this regard, the Commission sent a request for information on national legislation transposing the Directive.

Finally, the Commission will take the opportunity to inform the Ministers about future initiatives in this area, including the organization of a meeting with main stakeholders from the pig sector and Member States on 17 October 2012 to discuss further this issue.

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