



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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Quality schemes in agriculture reinforced today

Today, under the Danish Presidency, the Special Committee on Agriculture (SCA) supported the compromise text agreed by the Council and the European Parliament representatives during the last trilogue concerning the regulation on quality schemes for agricultural products ([17672/10](#))¹. This regulation will achieve a simplified regime for the quality schemes under one single legal instrument and a more robust framework for the protection and promotion of quality agricultural products.

This text is a part of the so called "Quality package" consisting of a set of proposals designed to put in place a coherent agricultural product quality policy. This policy aims at assisting farmers to better communicate the qualities, characteristics and attributes of agricultural product and at ensuring appropriate consumer information. The "Quality package" includes also a proposal to modify regulation No 1234/2007 (the single common market organisation(CMO)) concerning marketing standards for agricultural products which is currently discussed between the Council and the European Parliament.

According to the agreement between the Council and the Parliament, once all procedural steps are completed, including a vote by the Parliament at the plenary session, the regulation regarding the agricultural product quality schemes will be adopted by the Council and the European Parliament in the first reading.

The main elements of the regulation include the reinforcement of the existing scheme for protected designations of origin and geographical indications (PDOs and PGIs); overhauling the traditional specialities guaranteed scheme (TSGs), and laying down a new framework for the development of Optional Quality Terms to provide consumers with further information.

¹ 17672/10: proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on agricultural product quality schemes as part of the Quality package. This package includes also a proposal to modify regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 (the single common market organisation) concerning marketing standards for agricultural products.

P R E S S

As regards the PDOs and PGIs (excluding wines, aromatised wines and spirits), the main elements designed to strengthen and simplify the scheme are the following:

- the recognition of the roles and responsibilities of groups applying for registration of names with regard to monitoring, promotion and communication;
- the reinforcement and clarification of the level of protection of registered names and the common EU symbols;
- the shortening of procedure to register names;

The definition of TSGs where the time period for a product to be considered traditional is set to 30 years as some Member States had difficulties justifying 50 years of use (as originally proposed by the Commission. The renewed EU scheme for TSGs is simplified (registration process streamlined by shortening delays, procedures aligned on PDO-PGI ones) and targeted in several respects to reinforce the credibility of the scheme.

Optional quality terms aim to communicate value added characteristics of the products. A new optional quality term has been introduced in the regulation: "mountain product". Also, the Commission will have to assess whether to create one on "product of island farming" and "local farming and direct sales".

Despite a longstanding demand by the EP there will be no provisions on this regulation covering the issue of management of supply but the Council has committed itself to discussing it under the framework of the reform of the single CMO.