



**COUNCIL OF
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NOTE

From: General Secretariat
To: Delegations

No. Cion prop.: 15396/11 + REV 1, REV 2 (NL), REV 3 - COM(2011) 625 final/3

Subject: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council
establishing rules for direct payments to farmers under support schemes within the
framework of the common agricultural policy (*CAP Reform*)
- Presidency questionnaire on the nature of the young farmers scheme

With a view to structure the debate in Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") at its session on 22-23 October 2012, delegations will find in Annex the questionnaire drawn up by the Presidency on the nature of the young farmers scheme.

CAP REFORM: DIRECT PAYMENTS

Presidency questionnaire

Nature of the young farmers scheme

The CAP reform proposals of the Commission provide for a young farmers scheme under both pillars of the CAP. The scheme under the first pillar was designed to be of mandatory nature. However, the Progress report¹ drawn up under the Danish Presidency noted that "while the special scheme for young farmers is broadly welcomed, a majority of delegations want a voluntary scheme, leaving Member States to decide whether to operate the scheme and how to shape it according to their needs, while other delegations could support the proposed mandatory scheme."

A new proposal was recently debated at Working Party level that in effect implies that Member States would be required to implement a scheme in favour of young farmers either under the first or under the second pillar.

Given the highly political nature of this topic, the Presidency feels that this debate should be carried out at the appropriate political level.

Delegations are therefore invited to give a clear and concise answer to the following questions:

Question 1

Do you agree that ageing of the farming population is an EU-wide problem and that common action is required at EU level?

Question 2

What is your view about the nature of the Young Farmers Scheme and on the proposal that Member States deciding to apply the respective second pillar scheme should be exempted from the application of the first pillar scheme?

¹ Doc. 8949/12.