



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 12 July 2016
(OR. en)

11144/16

AGRI 415
AGRIORG 64

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Council

Subject: Rice imports from EBA Countries
- Information from the Italian delegation

Delegations will find in Annex an information note from the Italian delegation on the above subject to be presented under "Any other business" at the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") on 18 July 2016.

Rice imports from EBA Countries

The constant increase in imports of rice from EBA Countries is seriously damaging the market of *indica* rice cultivated in the EU.

Since when (2009/2010 campaign) imports from countries under EBA regime were completely liberalized for rice, imports of duty-free *indica* milled rice have grown year after year, from 28,000 tons up to 345,969 tons at the end of the marketing year 2014/2015. In the present marketing year the imports trend is dramatically increasing: imports from September 2015 to June 2016 reached 316,974 tons (37,370 tons more than last year). At the beginning, rice imported according to EBA regime came only from Cambodia but soon Myanmar too has begun to sell part of its rice in the EU. Together with milled rice imports, small packages rice imports are increasing, too; this means that both Cambodia and Myanmar are planning to expand further in the Internal market.

The imports trend of duty-free *indica* milled rice is seriously affecting the EU rice sector: in particular, in Italy *indica* rice area halved over two years: from 72,000 hectares in 2013, to 55,000 hectares in 2014 and 35,000 hectares in 2015.

The Italian delegation has repeatedly urged the Commission to take action and solve the problem of duty free imports of *indica* rice from Cambodia and Myanmar. Recently, the European Commission has announced that from 13th to 15th of July a delegation from DG Agri and DG Trade will travel to Cambodia to discuss with local Authorities about the issue of rice import flows. The delegation is committed to require the rules compliance concerning rice origin and the interdiction of mixing fragrant and not-fragrant rice.

Considering the sensitivity of this problem, Italy kindly asks the Commission to report immediately about the contents and results of the meeting in Cambodia.