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**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations  
Subject: Market situation

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Further to the ministerial lunch discussion held on 15 February 2016 and in preparation of the March "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council, delegations will find attached a note from the Danish delegation on the above-mentioned subject.

**Danish comments on possible future measures to address the difficult market situation in various agricultural sectors**

The Russian veterinary restrictions on pig meat due to African Swine Fever have created a very difficult situation for many European farmers, and it is important to continue the dialogue with Russia in order to find a solution. The market situation has in several sectors deteriorated because of low demand in more traditional markets. This has underlined the need to open alternative markets and identify actions which can ameliorate the difficult situation on the market for agri-food products.

Denmark acknowledges the efforts of the European Commission to ensure enhanced market access for agri-food products in third countries. Denmark fully supports the active role taken by the agricultural commissioner to visit a number of third countries important for the European export of agri-food products during 2016.

Enhanced market access for agri-food products in third countries is high on the agenda in EU. The Commission initiated a discussion in July 2015 by presenting a discussion paper: “The EU as One – working together on Market access”. The topic has also been discussed at the Conference: “Market Access – Creating shared value through partnership” held 26 January 2016 in Brussels. The Dutch presidency has as a priority to continue the process and will maintain focus on the development of new initiatives which will promote export of agri-food products to third countries.

The topic has been discussed among the ministers in February 2016, at the Working Party of Veterinary Experts (Potsdam Group) 1 February 2016, and at the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO)-meeting on 23 February 2016.

## **Proposals for actions to enhance market access for agri-food products**

Denmark proposes the following concrete ideas part of which was stated in the Danish non paper and presented at the Market access conference in January 2016:

- The approach to market access negotiations should be sensitive to context, allowing for the Commission in cooperation with Member States and industry to engage market access negotiations in a step by step approach leading to market access for additional Member States and/or producers, and target its capacity and negotiating power on horizontal and generic market access issues that support Member States and industry in their efforts to achieve market access.
- The Commission could produce simple and clear presentations on certain aspects of food safety and animal health policy that can be used by Member States when they engage with third countries. Standard questionnaires could be developed under this umbrella.
- Further facilitate for third countries to experience how the internal market works, i.e. by undertaking “pilot visits”, where representatives from the Commission together with representatives from a Member States present how the EU system works for authorities in certain third countries. Pilot countries could inter alia be Brazil, Indonesia and Iran. These represent two large difficult markets and a new upcoming and interesting market.
- Carry out a mapping exercise of available resources at Commission and Member States level in the target market.
- Reflect on the opportunity to complement the provision of the work undertaken by the Potsdam group, and initiate a discussion with Member States on the relevance of establishing a troubleshooting network for ongoing involvement of Member States in hands on practical issues.
- Improved communication on the EU-system and EU-standards to third countries.
- Improve the sharing of information and best practices between Commission and Member States
- Small and medium sized establishments should have easier access to information.
- Local Member States representatives and Commission representatives in third countries should improve their corporation.
- Continue to develop the ambitious program for free trade negotiations and ensure effective implementation of agreements already in place.

- Close partnership between Member States and the Commission in international negotiations. However, this should not have a negative impact on ongoing trade. It should also be recognized that one size does not fit all. There must be room to let both Member States and Commission negotiate, depending on the specific situation. Solutions must be flexible, proportional and operational.
- Ensure that the intracommunity trade is well functioning, i.e. intra trade certificates.
- Risk analysis on the impact of third countries' general political and economic situation on trade.

At the Chief Veterinary Officers (CVO) meeting 23 February 2016 the Danish Chief Veterinary Officer emphasized that there is an overall need for intensifying the collaboration and coordination between Member States, the industry and the Commission. This should result in more optimal use of resources and enhance bargaining power in third countries.

Furthermore, an adjustment of the organizational structure in the Commission and Council working groups is suggested. The aim of adjustment of the organization should be to

- strengthen the corporation between the DG's in the Commission
- strengthen the corporation between the Commission and the Member States

It should result in a more lean set up, better strategic planning and prioritization and enhanced coordination and sharing of information.

Denmark is looking forward to participate in further discussions and development of new initiatives to promote market access for EU agri-food products.