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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Conference "The development of Plant Proteins in the European Union – Opportunities and Challenges" (Vienna, 22 23 November 2018)
- Information from the Presidency

Delegations will find attached in Annex a note from the Presidency on the above subject, concerning an item under 'Any other business' at the Council ('Agriculture and Fisheries') on 17-18 December 2018.

**Conference on the `Development of Plant Proteins in the European Union`
(Vienna, 22 – 23 November 2018)**

Protein crops constitute a crucial and irreplaceable element in human nutrition as well as in animal feeding. Not only will an increase in the growing of protein crops in the European Union increase self-sufficiency, but it will also have important positive effects on the environment and on the climate. Aiming at the examination of the demand for and the supply with plant protein in the EU and at discussing the possibilities of the further development of protein production the European Commission has written the report on the development of plant proteins in the European Union.

In connection with the publication of the report of the European Commission a technical conference dealing with the topic “The Development of Plant Proteins in the European Union - Opportunities and Challenges”, and involving stakeholders from the fields of agriculture and supply chains, feed industry, nutrition, consumer trends, and environment as well as bio-economy and innovation, took place in Vienna from 22 to 23 November 2018. This event (https://ec.europa.eu/info/events/development-plant-proteins-europe-opportunities-and-challenges-2018-nov-22_en) was organised jointly by the European Commission and by the Austrian Presidency of the Council.

The meeting focused on the presentation of the report of the European Commission. In the panels “Research and Innovation”, “Agronomic Practices and Environmental Benefits” and “Development of Supply Chains and Market Segments” the technical sub-aspects were discussed intensively on the first day.

On the second day the necessary future framework conditions were discussed at the high-level panel by Federal Minister Köstinger, Commissioner Hogan, and the Member of the European Parliament, Ulrike Müller. The discussion focused on the question to which extent the enormous potential of the protein crop production in the European Union can be extended. Minister Köstinger emphasized the importance of the regional cultivation of protein crops. This is to the benefit of a better self-sufficiency and sustainably saves resources. Austria sets a good example in this context. Commissioner Hogan underlined the necessity to set a priority on protein crops in the field of research and development in future. Moreover, he considers it to be useful to create a European platform. This platform should serve in particular the exchange of knowledge and know-how and involve in this way all stakeholders along the supply chain. Ulrike Müller reported on the development at the European Parliament and underlined as well the importance of strengthened self-sufficiency with regard to plant proteins.

The conference, which took place in Vienna, is to trigger off future activities and efforts and to promote the continuation and intensification of joint efforts, in order to make sure that the multifarious opportunities in all fields related to protein crops along the whole supply chain can be seized in the best possible way.