



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: US additional duties on certain European agro-food products
- Information from the Italian delegation

Delegations will find in the Annex a note from the Italian delegation on the above-mentioned subject, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 14-15 October 2019.

US additional duties on certain European agro-food products

At the beginning of October 2019, the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) released a list of products to be subjected to additional duties of 25%, including some important and flagship European agriculture products. The additional duties would take effect from the 18th October 2019.

In this regard, we regret that the agricultural sector is once again paying the bill for a political decision on trade that has nothing to do with agriculture. Indeed, farmers and agro-food enterprises have invested a lot of efforts and resources to improve their exports to third countries, especially in the United States, and they have planned to continue to do so.

Most of the European quality products would be affected by these new duties. Considering that Italy exports more than 4.2 billion euros of agro-food products to the US market per year, Italian farmers will be deeply affected by these new duties, mainly for the production of cheeses, and as well, citrus and fruit juices, some kinds of pig meat and mortadella, and other agriculture products.

On this regard, we call the Commission to consider this issue as a priority and to assess the opportunity to activate proper market measures within the provisions of the CMO regulation, to avoid market disturbance and to protect our farmers and workers.

In this context, Italy deems that it could be worth to provide for a rapid activation of private storage for cheeses. In addition, it would be also important to strengthen the actions already provided for the promotion in third Countries, in particular it could be worth to assess whether to dedicate a specific ceiling for the promotion of the products affected by the additional duties.

Moreover, it could be necessary also to allow Member States to provide for some support those farmers who will be seriously penalized and damaged by the duties.

We are confident that the Commission will consider the problem as a priority and monitor closely all the consequences for EU farmers and markets, and to implement the possible tools and actions that could be activated.