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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

Subject: Current situation in the pig-farming sector
- Information from the Czech delegation

Delegations will find in Annex a note from the Czech delegation on the above subject, concerning an item under "Any other business" at the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") on 21 September 2020.

Current situation in the pig farming sector

Since 2018, the pig meat sector has been facing problems that have been deepened by the ongoing coronavirus crisis. Moreover, in 2019, the EU pig meat sector was largely affected by spreading of African swine fever (ASF) in the EU and in South-East Asia, one of the world's major importers of pig meat.

Even though the increased demand for pork on the global market after the loss of Chinese production improved the situation of the European market, this year has been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic with a direct impact on the EU manufacturing industry. The ongoing spread of ASF within the EU can lead to further consequences, which will result in further negative impact on prices in pig meat sector.

Therefore, the Czech Republic asks the Commission to provide a detailed analysis of the current situation in the pig meat sector and possible scenarios of future development.

During the COVID-19 crisis the importance and sensitivity of primary agricultural production and the processing industry has been fully demonstrated.

In order to ensure the competitiveness of pig meat producers and downstream manufacturers in each Member State, the issue of pig farming and self-sufficiency needs to be addressed at the EU level.

EU consumers demand further enhancement of welfare level as well as food safety. Therefore, it is necessary to support sectors while they face new challenges.

As farmers will be forced to spend significant financial resources on veterinary measures to combat the spread of ASF, these costs will necessarily be reflected in the production costs.

The current situation raises concerns about further development in the pig meat sector throughout the EU. The obvious risk of price drop on the European market urges the need to call for a timely solution of this situation. This is why the Czech Republic asks the Commission to propose measures to help the sector.