



Council of the  
European Union

Brussels, 12 January 2022  
(OR. en)

5177/22

AGRI 9  
AGRIFIN 5  
AGRIORG 6  
WTO 5

**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Council

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Subject: Potential negative effects of the embargo imposed by Belarus on the imports of a number of agri-food products, including apples  
*- Information from the Polish delegation*

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Delegations will find in the Annex a note from the Polish delegation on the above-mentioned subject, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 17 January 2022.

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## **Potential negative effects of the embargo imposed by Belarus on EU exports of a number of agri-food products, including apples**

Negative effects for the EU, including the Polish agricultural sector, may be caused by the export ban of agri-food products from a number of countries, imposed by Belarus from January 1, 2022, including from the EU. The introduction by Belarus of the above-mentioned ban, which has no basis under international law, is probably intended to deepen the negative effects of the Russian embargo, in force since 2014, on EU countries, including Polish producers and exporters of agricultural goods.

Before introducing embargo on imports of certain agri-food products from EU countries in 2014 by the Russian Federation, Russia was one of the largest markets for Polish fruit and vegetables. After the introduction of the embargo, the role of a large recipient of this commodity group was partially taken over by Belarus.

In 2020, the value of Polish agri-food exports to Belarus amounted to EUR 252.4 million. In the period January-October 2021, the value of Polish agri-food exports to Belarus amounted to EUR 194.0 million. The values of exports and shares in the total volume of Polish exports of individual products in the period January-October 2021 were as follows:

- a) pears - EUR 15.4 million and nearly 83%;
- b) apples - EUR 31.8 million and approx. 14% (Belarus was the second largest recipient after Egypt in terms of volume);
- c) fresh strawberries - EUR 4.5 million and over 70%;
- d) frozen cherries and sour cherries - EUR 8.3 million and approx. 30% (Belarus was the second largest recipient after Germany in terms of volume);
- e) frozen vegetables - EUR 12.5 million and approx. 6%.

In the case of Poland, the negative effects of the embargo will therefore mainly concern horticultural production. The embargo may deepen the problems related to the management of this production in Poland, which may also translate into the situation on the EU market. Both in 2020 and in the period January-October 2021, apples had the largest share in the value of Polish agri-food exports to Belarus. This share was 18.4% and 16.3%, respectively. It should be remembered here that Poland is the largest producer of apples in the EU.

Poland requests the European Commission to monitor the situation related to the embargo and to take measures to prevent losses for EU entities in the agricultural sector.

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