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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	AOB item for the meeting of the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council of 17 November 2025: Threat to farming and vegetable growing by reed glasswing cicadas (<i>Pentastiridius leporinus</i>) <i>- Information from Germany</i>

The reed glasswing cicada is an insect that can transmit two bacterial pathogens which trigger SBR (a low-sugar syndrome) and Stolbur disease. Originally only inhabiting reeds, the cicada has expanded its spectrum of host plants enormously in recent years. In Germany, we have observed a rapid increase in this cicada population in past years, which has correspondingly led to an increase of bacterial infections in crops.

The cicada has spread out, especially in Southern Germany and up to the middle, west and east of the country. It is a serious threat to the vital sectors of farming and vegetable-growing alike. Sugar beets and potatoes are currently the most affected crops. Other affected crops include root vegetables such as carrots and turnips, red beets, celery, asparagus, onions and rhubarb. The diseases triggered by the bacterial pathogens have enormous impacts on the harvests of the affected crops. Damages range from reduced ability to stockpile to total losses.

This year, for the first time, Germany has issued emergency authorisations for the use of plant protection products to combat this cicada. Ongoing research projects have shown that, in addition to an adjusted crop cycle, using fallow land over the winter can also be an effective means to fight cicada nymphs living in the soil. Avoiding greening removes the source of nutrients for the nymphs, and these then die off. The cicadas that hatch the following year can thus effectively be curbed. As part of an amendment request for its 2026 CAP strategy plan, Germany has therefore also applied for a specific exception from the GAEC 6 standard (minimum quantity of vegetation cover in regions at risk of infestation).

In order to minimise the further spread of the cicada in the best possible way, we need a number of measures, which encompass effective plant protection products and, among other things, basic opportunities to use fallow land over the winter where applicable.

We are very interested to hear whether other Member States are experiencing similar problems with these cicadas and what approaches they are taking to combat them. We should also collectively review whether coordinated measures are to be taken at European level in order to reduce the further spread of this cicada in the best possible way.
