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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: Agricultural Market task Force
- State of play

In view of the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council of 27 June 2016, delegations will find attached a document provided by the Commission on the above-mentioned subject.

**Information-sheet for Member States concerning the
Agricultural Markets Task Force, Council meeting on 27 June 2016**

In January 2016, a Commission expert group has been set up by the name of "Agricultural Markets Task Force" (TF). It consists of 12 experts external to the EC (Annex A). It is headed by Dutch ex-agricultural minister Mr Cees Veerman.

The participation of the European agri-food sector in global markets has created important trading opportunities but also exposed it to greater market instability and increased price volatility.

The task of the TF is to provide the Commission with advice and expertise regarding the **functioning of agricultural markets and the farmers' position in the food supply chain**. It is to make recommendations and propose policy initiatives in this field so as improve future conditions for farmers, taking into account global challenges for sustainable agriculture.

The TF will present its outcomes in a **final report in autumn 2016**.

The themes the TF looks into are market transparency, access for farmers to futures and financial instruments to hedge price risks, options for arranging contractual relations within the chain and legal possibilities for organising farmers' collective actions.

The work of the group is organised around meetings in Brussels on specific sub-themes (Annex B). Four meetings have taken place so far. A fifth and a sixth meeting are scheduled for 28 June and 15 September respectively. The morning sessions of its meetings are normally dedicated to hearing ad hoc specialists concerning a specific theme. The theme is then discussed on the basis of an Issue Paper circulated by the Chair.

The TF also engaged with COMAGRI, with the Civil Dialogue Group and other stakeholders. It will meet the High Level representatives of the Member States to discuss the particular problems in the dairy sector on 16 September.

Relevant documentation concerning the activities of the TF can be found on the website of the TF (search engine entry "Agricultural Markets Task Force").¹ On the website there is an **invitation to stakeholders to send comments** and ideas to the TF.

The TF is distinct from the High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain in that it focuses on the position of agricultural producers in the supply chain. The TF's mandate is also more limited in time: it has been set up and will finish its work in 2016. The High Level Forum was established in 2011. Its duration has been extended last year and now covers 2015-2019. The High Level Forum comprises Member State national authorities responsible for the food sector at ministerial level and representatives of the private sector.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/agri-markets-task-force/index_en.htm

ANNEX A

Members of the Agricultural Markets Task Force

1. Cees P. **VEERMAN** pdf - (Chairman) - Professor of sustainable European-oriented rural development at University of Tilburg and Wageningen University - NL
2. Esther **VALVERDE CABRERO** (Vice-chair) - Deputy Director-General for Food Supply Chain Structure, Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment - ES
3. Andrzej **BABUCHOWSKI** - Titular professor, Faculty of Food Sciences, University of Warmia and Mazury, Olsztyn; president of the Dairy Industry Innovation Institute - PL
4. Jérôme **BEDIER** - Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Secretary-General of the Carrefour Group - FR
5. Gianpiero **CALZOLARI** - Coordinator of the dairy sector of Alleanza Cooperative Italiane - IT
6. David **DOBBIN** - Group Chief Executive of United Dairy Farmers - UK
7. Louise **FRESCO** - President of Wageningen University and Research Centre - NL
8. Helfried **GIESEN** - Retired Chief Executive of the Board of the meat cooperative Westfleisch SCE - DE
9. Torbjörn **IWARSON** - Independent commodity markets adviser - SE
10. Aniko **JUHASZ** - General Director of the Research Institute of Agricultural Economics (AKI) in Budapest - HU
11. Anne Laure **PAUMIER** - Member of COPA-COGECA cereals expert group; Deputy Head of Coop de France (consultant on grain market and risk management) - FR
12. Igor **SARMIR** - Commercial relations expert at the Slovak Chamber of Agriculture and Food; Member of the European Economic & Social Committee - SK

Meeting dates of the Agricultural Markets Task Force

ANNEX B

TF Meeting	Date	Theme
1	13 January 2016	Kick-off meeting
2	08 March 2016	Market Transparency
3	12 April 2016	Access by farmers to futures and financial instruments
4	24 May 2016	Contractualisation and contractual relations between farmers and other actors in the food supply chain
5	28 June 2016	Collective self-help tools for farmers to strengthen their position in the food supply chain
6	15 September 2016	General

Other meetings with institutional stakeholders	Date	Interlocutor
	26 April 2016	COMAGRI (TF members: Veerman, Bedier, Iwarson)
	23 May 2016	Civil Dialogue Group (Veerman)
	16 September 2016	Meeting with High Level Representatives of Member States

ANNEX C

2nd meeting of the TF, "Market Transparency", 8 March 2016

Time	Item	Agenda Item No
9.30-11.00	Discussion of TF about market transparency based on the Chair's issue paper	1.
11.00-13.00	Hearing by TF of three external experts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Craig Morris, Deputy Administrator of US Agricultural Marketing Service overseeing the Livestock Mandatory Price Reporting programme • Prof. Stephen McCorriston, University of Exeter, coordinator of TRANSFOP (Transparency of Food Prices, http://www.transfop.eu/) • Ms Céline Giner, OECD, Agricultural Policy Analyst, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, responsible for the study on the comparison of price collection systems in developed countries 	2.
13.00-14.30	Lunch break	
14.30-17.00	Continuation of discussion among members of the Task Force about market transparency on the basis of the issue paper, the questions raised in this paper and the contributions by the external experts	3.

3rd meeting of the TF, "Futures, EFSI and Financial Instruments", 12 April 2016

Time	Item	Agenda Item No
9.30-10.45	Discussion based on the Chair's issue papers	1.
10.45-11.30	Hearing of external expert on Futures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr B. Teuwen (DLV consultancy) 	2.
11.30-12.30	Presentations on Futures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr T. Iwarson, member of TF • Ms A. Paumier, member of TF 	3.
12.30-13.00	Presentation by Commission representative on EFSI and Financial Instruments	4.
13.00-14.30	Lunch break	
14.30-17.00	Discussion among members of the Task Force about Futures, EFSI and Financial Instruments on the basis of the issue papers, the questions raised in these papers, the presentations by the experts of the TF and the contribution by the external	5.

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4th meeting of the TF, "Contractualisation & Contractual Relations", 24 May 2016

Time	Item	Agenda Item No
9.30-10.30	Discussion based on the Chair's issue papers	1.
10.30-11.00	Presentation (contractual relations) by representative of DG GROW (European Commission)	2.
11.00-12.15	Presentations (contractual relations): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Sarmir, member of TF • Ms Valverde, member of TF 	3.
12.15-12.45	Presentation by Ms Del Cont, external expert, Nantes University (contractualisation)	4.
12.45-14.15	Lunch break	
14.15-14.45	Presentation by Mr Tregaro, external expert, FranceAgriMer (contractualisation)	5.
14.45-17.00	Discussion among members of the Task Force on the basis of the issue papers, the questions raised in these papers, the presentation by the experts of the TF and the contribution by the external experts	6.

5th meeting of the TF, "Collective Self-Help Tools", 28 June 2016

Time	Item	Agenda Item No
9.30-10.00	Discussion based on the Chair's issue paper	1.
10.00-10.30	Presentation by a representative of DG COMP concerning competition law (European Commission)	2.
10.30-11.15	Presentation by external expert: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr R. Sanchez de Puerta, Spanish <i>Cooperativas Agroalimentarias</i>, concerning collective storage management in the olives sector 	3.
11.15-11.30	Coffee break	
11.30-13.00	Presentations by external experts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr O. Thelen, <i>QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH</i>, 	4.

	<p>German "Initiative Tierwohl"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr E. Hubers, <i>Dutch Organisation for Agriculture and Horticulture (LTO Nederland)</i>, initiative "Chicken of Tomorrow" 	
13.00-14.30	Lunch break	
14.30-16.30	Discussion among members of the Task Force	5.