



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Council

Subject: Study on the impact of concessions in Free Trade Agreement on
agricultural products

With a view to the meeting of the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") on 14 - 15 November 2016, delegations will find attached a note on the above subject.

International trade in agricultural products

The EU is pursuing a broad, ambitious and effective trade policy aimed at boosting jobs, growth and investment. The Union has the widest range of free trade agreements (FTAs) in the world, concluded, under way and planned, with major players - countries and regions. Most recently the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with Canada was signed at the EU-Canada Summit on 30 October 2016. It is the EU's most comprehensive FTA to date. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the United States is considered the most ambitious and strategic trade negotiation undertaken by the EU so far. Other strategic priorities for the Union include the EU-Japan and EU-Mercosur FTAs, currently under negotiation, as well as agreements with Australia and New Zealand, where talks are likely to start in the near future.

Agriculture plays a key role in these agreements, given the broad range of countries/regions and sectors they cover. Once implemented, the FTAs have the potential to open up big opportunities for exporting EU agri-food products, but could also allow for more imports and increasing competition on domestic markets. The need for better visibility of the overall impact of these agreements on the EU agricultural sector has therefore become increasingly important. Concerns over potential negative effects have prompted Member States to repeatedly call on the Commission to carry out an impact assessment of the cumulative effects of EU FTAs on the Union's agriculture.

In response, the European Commission launched a study to analyse the economic cumulative effects on the EU agricultural sector of trade agreements recently concluded (e.g. Canada, Vietnam), major agreements under negotiation (e.g. TTIP, Japan, Mercosur), upcoming FTAs (e.g. Australia, New Zealand), and existing agreements undergoing modernisation (e.g. Mexico, Turkey). It is expected that the study could be made available in time for the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") on 14-15 November 2016.

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At Council on 15 November, the Commission will be invited to outline the finding of this study on the cumulative effects of trade agreements on the EU agricultural sector. Member States will have the opportunity to provide an initial reaction to the results and conclusions of the cumulative assessment.
