



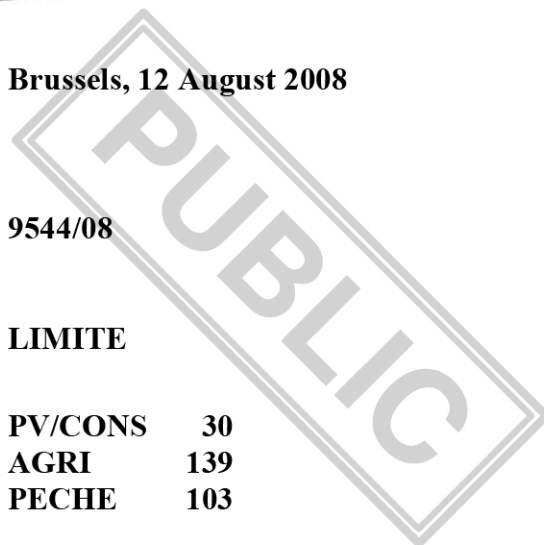
**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 12 August 2008**

**9544/08**

**LIMITE**

<b>PV/CONS</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>AGRI</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>PECHE</b>	<b>103</b>



**DRAFT MINUTES <sup>1</sup>**

---

Subject : **2867th** meeting of the Council of the European Union (**AGRICULTURE and FISHERIES**), held in Brussels on 19 May 2008

---

---

<sup>1</sup> Information relating to the final adoption of Council acts which may be released to the public is contained in Addendum 1 to these minutes.

## CONTENTS

Page

1.	Adoption of the agenda .....	3
2.	Approval of the list of "A" items .....	3
3.	Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market .....	4
4.	Any Other Business	
	(a) WTO-DDA Negotiations.....	4
	(b) The small farm scale – still an important role to play in the future European agriculture.....	5
	(c) Agricultural market situation – evolution of agricultural and food prices .....	5
	(d) Situation on the milk market (Request from the Lithuanian delegation) .....	6
	(e) Situation on the milk market (Request from the Latvian delegation) .....	6
	(f) Marketing standards for fruit and vegetables .....	6
	(g) Block Exemption Regulation .....	7
	(h) Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR).....	8
	(i) Chemical decontamination of fresh meat.....	8
	(j) Piracy off the Somali coast.....	9
	(k) Request for national aid under Article 88 (2), third subparagraph, EC Treaty .....	10

o

o                    o

1. **Adoption of the agenda**  
9061/08 OJ CONS 25 AGRI 118 PECHE 94

The Council adopted the above agenda with the addition of item (k) – Request for national aid under Article 88 (2), third subparagraph, EC Treaty, under Any Other Business.

2. **Approval of the list of "A" items**  
9112/08 PTS A 22

The Council approved the "A" items listed in 9112/08.

Information relating to item 8 is set out in Addendum 1 to these minutes.

The documents in item 7 should read as follows:

**Item 7:** 6124/08 AGRI 36 ENV 69 CODEC 150  
+ COR 1 (de)  
+ COR 2 (nl)  
+ REV 1 (et)  
+ REV 2 (fi)  
**+ REV 3 (hu)**  
**+ REV 4 (ro)**  
8843/08 CODEC 517 AGRI 115 ENV 249  
6124/08 AGRI 36 ENV 69 CODEC 150 ADD 1  
**+ ADD 1 REV 1**

3. **Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market**

- Political agreement  
(Public deliberation pursuant to article 8(1)(b) CRP)  
11755/06 AGRILEG 127 ENV 411 CODEC 773  
9012/08 AGRILEG 67 ENV 261 CODEC 545  
+ ADD 1  
+ ADD 1 COR 1

The Chair presented the progress made so far on this dossier noting, in particular, that the Presidency compromise text had gathered the support of a large majority of delegations.

He nevertheless admitted that a certain number of delegations and the Commission could not agree with the text of the political agreement. For that matter, the Commission confirmed its reservations regarding the legal basis, Annex II and Article 56.

The Chair therefore concluded that this file would have to be submitted to the Permanent Representatives Committee again and invited delegations to show a constructive spirit in order to allow the timely adoption of the Council common position.

4. **Any Other Business**

- (a) **WTO-DDA Negotiations**
- State of play

The Council proceeded to an extensive exchange of views on the state of play of the negotiations, in expectation of the forthcoming submission in Geneva of the newly revised text of draft modalities on Agriculture. Delegations and the Commission representative expressed again their intention to achieve a global, ambitious and balanced final outcome within and across all areas of the DDA.

**(b) The small farm scale – still an important role to play in the future European agriculture**

- Request from the Romanian delegation  
9283/08 AGRI 128

The Romanian delegation drew the Council's attention to the social and environmental benefits of small-scale farming in the EU and its significant potential to contribute to food supply, especially on local markets. This delegation also requested the Commission to examine possibilities for better supporting this type of farming within the Common Agricultural Policy. The Romanian views, which were supported by the Bulgarian, Irish, Greek, Cypriot, Luxembourg, Maltese, Austrian, Polish and Portuguese delegations, are set out in detail in 9283/08.

The Commission representative, while sharing the view that viable small-scale farms can make a valuable contribution to food production and also to achieving environmental and social objectives, emphasised that the EU's current rural development policy offers Member States a range of possibilities to provide targeted support to small farms.

**(c) Agricultural market situation – evolution of agricultural and food prices**

- Information from the Presidency  
9290/08 AGRI 129

The Council held an exchange of views on the "Agricultural markets situation – evolution of agricultural and food prices" on the basis of a Presidency information note. This discussion concentrated in particular on the factors that influence the capacity of agriculture to provide sufficient food supply. The Council took note of the views of delegations and of the Commission representative in this regard, as well as the conclusions drawn by the Presidency.

- (d) Situation on the milk market**
  - Request from the Lithuanian delegation  
9276/08 AGRIORG 44
  
- (e) Situation on the milk market**
  - Request from the Latvian delegation  
9356/08 AGRIORG 45

The Council took note of the concerns expressed by the Lithuanian and Latvian delegations on the situation on the milk market, which, according to these delegations, calls for the re-establishment of export refunds for certain milk products. The Polish delegation highlighted the need for mechanisms to stimulate the consumption of milk, such as more efficient use of the school milk program.

The Commission representative acknowledged the recent fall in milk prices but rejected the request for export refunds, pointing out that 2007 prices were still below the limit set by the Council in 2003 for intervention prices and above the prices recorded in 2006.

- (f) Marketing standards for fruit and vegetables**
  - Request from the Spanish and Italian delegations supported by the French and Hungarian delegations  
9370/08 AGRIORG 46 AGRIFIN 26

The Spanish and Italian delegations expressed their concern about the amendment of the marketing standards for fruit and vegetable products as submitted by the Commission in its proposal under examination by the Management Committee to modify the Commission Regulation (EC) No 1580/2007 of 21 December 2007 laying down implementing rules of Council Regulations (EC) No 2200/96, (EC) No 2201/96 and (EC) No 1182/2007 in the fruit and vegetables sector. In particular, these delegations considered that the approach taken by the Commission amounts to a dismantling of the

marketing standards system in clear contravention of the political agreement reached by the Council in June 2007 on the fruit and vegetables reform. They underlined that marketing standards play an important role in facilitating and ensuring transparency in market operations while protecting consumers at the same time. They urged the Commission to reconsider its proposal that a majority of delegations do not support.

In response, the Commission representative indicated that the reduction of the number of marketing standards was in line with the political agreement reached in June 2007 and invited delegations to refer to the declaration made by the Commission on the marketing standards at the time. The Commission representative also recalled that Member States were all in favour of simplifying the CAP and, by accepting to reduce the number of marketing standards, they would adopt a coherent position.

**(g) Block Exemption Regulation**

- Request from the Czech delegation  
9337/08 AGRI 131 AGRIFIN 25

The Czech delegation expressed concerns with regard to the scope of the new draft "General Block Exemption Regulation" to be adopted by the Commission in the near future, which provides for aid being based on category of undertakings rather than on activities. The Czech concerns, which were shared by the Estonian, Latvian, Hungarian, Romanian, Slovakian and Swedish delegations, are set out in detail in 9337/08.

The Commission representative, while noting that this issue fell within the Commission's competence, said that work was under way in the Commission with a view to accommodating the Czech concerns.

**(h) Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)**

- Request from the German delegation  
9413/08 AGRI 132 SAN 81 DENLEG 51 VETER 6

In relation to the draft Council Conclusions on antimicrobial resistance to be examined by the Council (Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer affairs) on 9 and 10 June 2008, the Council took note of the German delegation's views on the significance of the antimicrobial resistance and its implications for stock breeding. The German delegation reminded ministers of the various existing measures against the spread of antimicrobial resistance already taken in the veterinary sector and highlighted the need for the agriculture ministers to agree on the measures that are necessary in the agriculture sector. The German delegation was supported by the French, Italian, Latvian, Dutch and Swedish delegations.

The Commission representative announced her full support for the draft Council Conclusions. In addition to the various initiatives taken in the Community to ensure the prudent use of antimicrobial medicines, she pointed out three key areas where action should still be sharpened, namely reinforcement of the existing monitoring, improvement of public education intending to avoid self-medication and development of an inter-sectoral approach.

**(i) Chemical decontamination of fresh meat**

- Request from the French delegation  
9427/08 AGRILEG 71

The Council took note of the French delegation's concerns about the plan announced at the last Transatlantic Economic Council, involving changes to the EU regulations that would allow importation of processed poultry meat using chemical decontamination, as



well as the use of such a production method in the EU. Since these measures were contested by a large number of delegations in the Council on 14 April 2008, the French delegation asked the Commission to give details on the actions that it intended to take on this matter. The French delegation was supported by the Belgian, Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, German, Estonian, Irish, Greek, Spanish, Italian, Cypriot, Latvian, Luxembourg, Hungarian, Dutch, Austrian, Portuguese, Romanian, Finnish and Swedish delegations.

The Commission representative announced that her department was drafting a proposal but that it had not yet been submitted to the College. She affirmed that any measures that the Commission might propose would be based on all available scientific opinions and would not go beyond the current European public health requirements. She also stressed that chemical decontamination could not be permitted to replace good hygiene practices all along the food chain.

**(j) Piracy off the Somali coast**

- Request from the Spanish delegation  
9436/08 PECHE 102 COAFR 149

The Spanish delegation informed the Council about the serious security situation in the waters off the Somali coast where several European vessels have been exposed to piracy. Spain's aim is to engage a debate over the issue and to ask the Council to request relevant institutions to undertake a study of the best ways for the EU to contribute, within the framework of the United Nations, towards an effective system of collective security in order to prevent, and fight against, acts of piracy in the waters off Somalia.

The French delegation shared the Spanish concerns and recalled that several Member States had made resources available in the area and that initiatives are undertaken within the Security Council of the United Nations to improve the security situation.

The Commission emphasised that it was fully aware of the situation and would reflect on the Spanish proposal. However, it felt that further discussions on this issue should take place within the General Affairs and External Relations Council.

**(k) Request for national aid under Article 88 (2), third subparagraph, EC Treaty**  
– Information from the Cypriot delegation

The Cypriot delegation announced that Cyprus would submit to the Council a request for granting national aid under Article 88(2), third subparagraph, EC Treaty, with a view to mitigating the consequences of exceptional drought for Cypriot farmers.

=====