



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 22 June 2010

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NOTE

from:	Presidency
to:	Council
Subject:	Simplification of the CAP

With a view to the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council on 29 June 2010, delegations will find attached a note from the Presidency on the above mentioned subject.

Simplification of EU legislation, and in particular of agricultural legislation, including the animal and plant health field, has been identified by all the actors involved (Council, Commission and European Parliament) as a key issue in diminishing the administrative burden placed on European farmers, streamlining rules and regulations and improving the quality of the legislation adopted.

Over the last few years, these three institutions have undertaken the task of simplifying EU agricultural legislation in their respective domains and within their responsibilities.

Thus, the Commission initiated in 2007 an Action Programme for Reducing Administrative Burdens¹ which is still ongoing, with the commitment of reducing administrative burdens by 25% by 2012. In the Action Programme, priority was given to 42 legal acts (later extended to 72), including 6 in the area of the Common Agricultural Policy and 7 in the area of Food Safety and Animal Health.

More specifically, in February 2006 the Commission, set up a working group, composed of experts from Member States, whose remit has been to explore ways to simplify agricultural legislation at a technical level, to facilitate the exchange of views and best practices among Member States and, where appropriate, to provide recommendations on simplification proposals. To date, 13 meetings of this Working Group have been held.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/better-regulation/administrative-burdens/action-programme/index_en.htm#h2-objective-and-timeline

On the other hand, the Council of the European Union has also dealt with the issue of simplification at various levels, including the Special Committee on Agriculture and the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries"). At the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 24 April 2009 a number of delegations presented a list of 39 proposals aimed at simplifying various aspects of EU agricultural legislation¹. In response, a Commission staff working document² was issued assessing these 39 suggestions for simplification and the Commission briefly presented the factual state of play on the follow up of these proposals³ at the Special Committee on Agriculture on 14 June 2010.

Finally, at its Plenary of 18 May 2010, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the simplification of the CAP⁴. This resolution contains a number of suggestions for simplification in various fields of the CAP (cross-compliance, direct payments, single payment scheme, rural development), as well as in fields related to animal identification issues.

The Presidency intends to organise an exchange of views on the simplification of agriculture and veterinary legislation drawing on the above-mentioned elements and covering legislation under the responsibility of Commissioners Ciolos and Dalli.

¹ 9103/09

² 16208/09

³ 10989/10

⁴ P7_TA(2010)0172, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P7-TA-2010-0172> (rapporteur: Richard Ashworth)