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HEALTH & CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

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**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
“SEEDS AND PROPAGATING MATERIAL FOR AGRICULTURE, HORTICULTURE
AND FORESTRY”**

10 November 2011

Chairpersons: Ms Päivi Mannerkorpi and Mr Eric Poudelet (point 6.1)

All the Member States were present except Bulgaria and Cyprus. Norway participated as observer.

1. **Exchange of views on a Commission Recommendation on guidelines for the presentation of the information for the identification of lots of forest reproductive material and the information to be provided on the supplier's label or document. (Doc. SANCO/12453/2011)**

The Commission provided information about the planning to adopt guidelines recommending a presentation of the information to be provided in the supplier's label or document, which facilitates the understanding of this information in all Member States.

2. **Exchange of views on the implementation of Commission Directives 2008/62/EC and 2009/145/EC as regards the conservation and amateur varieties.**

The Commission presented statistics on the number of varieties in the Common Catalogues. 125 conservation varieties of agricultural crops from 12 Member States have been notified. For the vegetable varieties the work is ongoing in the Member States. 16 conservation varieties from 4 Member States and 87 'amateur varieties' from 3 Member States have been notified. An exchange of views took place on quantitative restrictions, region of origin, fees for registration, more strict national rules, plant passport requirements and future approach. The Commission asked the Member States to notify the recognised organisations of plant genetic resources for both of the Directives 2008/62/EC and 2009/145/EC.

3. **Exchange of views on the introduction in the Common Catalogue of the revised requirements for 00 varieties of oilseed rape.**

The Commission has received information from the Member States as regards the glucosinolate levels in rape seed varieties and it informed about its intention to publish the information with a new footnote (< 18 µmol/g, new '00 rape seed') in the next complete edition of the catalogue before the end of the year. For some varieties the Commission has received diverging information so that for the same variety the content is > 18 µmol/g in one Member State and < 18 µmol/g in another Member State. The Commission advised about the intention to introduce a third footnote which would inform about the diverging glucosinolate

content. The Member States will send written comments by 21 November 2011. The issue of a harmonised methodology to determine the glucosinolate content was highlighted again, and France informed about ongoing ring testing.

4. Exchange of views on the presentation of rootstocks in the Common catalogue of varieties of vegetable species.

Following the discussion in the previous Standing Committee meeting, the full list of the rootstock varieties to be included was made available to the Member States for final verification. The fifth supplement to the 29th complete edition, published in the Official Journal of 23 August 2011, included these varieties. Any changes or updates should be notified to the Commission and will be published according to the existing publication programme.

5. Update on the Seed and Propagating Material (S & PM) review.

The Commission gave a short update. The public consultation on the 'option and analysis paper' for the impact assessment of the (S&PM) review was published on the SANCO web site and ran from April to May 2011. Around 260 replies were received and have been published on the web site. The impact assessment and draft legal proposal are being prepared and the deadline for the adoption by the Commission is 3rd quarter 2012.

6. Miscellaneous

- The new EU Plant Variety data base was launched. The Commission gave a presentation of the new web site and the user friendly search tools. The database contains around 19000 varieties of agricultural crops and around 17000 varieties of vegetable crops. The paper versions published in the Official Journal will continue to present the official catalogues. The Commission asked the Member States to introduce a link to the database on their national catalogues' websites. Information on the new data base should be communicated.
- The delegate of Denmark introduced the need to discuss an EU coordination issue for the upcoming Extended Advisory Group meeting of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 24 to 27 January 2012 in Paris, France. In the OECD Annual meeting of 9-13 May in Istanbul, Turkey, the extension of the authorisation of field inspection under official supervision to pre-basic and basic seed production, was endorsed by a number of countries. As the basic legislation would first need to be amended for the EU to be able to follow this approach and this will take some time due to the ongoing revision, it was decided that the OECD rule could be amended. However, it was necessary to make clear that this new approach cannot be applied to imports into the EU. Seed lots of pre-basic and basic seed can only enter the EU under the equivalence arrangement, if pre-basic and basic crops have been inspected by official crop inspectors. Therefore there is a need to agree on a footnote text that should be added to the OECD Seed Schemes rules. Exchange of views on the text took place and an amended text will be circulated to the Member States.

- The Commission presented the request of the European Seed Association (ESA) to indicate the uses of Sudan grass, align the requirement for sample size with the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) and to amend the purity requirements for forage and biomass uses. A short exchange of views took place and the Member States will send written comments by 25 November 2011.
- The Polish delegate briefly presented the report of the Task Force 3 on Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls and highlighted the need for the experts on seed and plant propagating material to be in contact with experts responsible for the Regulation and to contribute to the meetings in that sector.
- The Estonian delegation reminded of its request to amend Annex II of the fodder plant Directive 66/401/EEC on minimum germination as regards hardseededness. The Commission will look for a possibility to carry out the amendments in a package with other changes.
- The French delegate raised a number of issues for a possible working programme for 2012: temporary experiment for certification under official supervision for pre-basic and basic seed, amendment of official label as regards net weight for rape seed, aligning sampling sizes for sorghum with ISTA rules and development of the common catalogues for vine. The Commission informed that its priority lies in the revision of the legislation of seed and plant propagating material but that it would be useful to set and discuss a programme for 2012, as has been done in earlier years.
- The Danish delegate informed about meetings under the Danish Presidency in the first quarter of 2012: 19 March 2011 International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) coordination and 27 June 2011 OECD coordination. In both meetings updates on S&PM review and Community Plant Variety Rights (CPVR) evaluation are included on the agenda. In addition, the national authority Plant Directorate has been merged with other agencies to form a new Danish AgriFish Agency.

7. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending Council Directive 2002/56/EC as regards the date laid down in Article 21(3) until which Member States are authorised to extend the validity of decisions concerning equivalence of seed potatoes from third countries.** (Doc. SANCO/12363/2011) Legal Base: Council Directive 2002/56/EC, Article 21(3) (Opinion of the Committee via the examination procedure)

The Commission presented the proposal. As work to establish a Union equivalence for seed potatoes from third countries has not been completed, it is necessary to extend the validity of the Member State decisions on equivalence for seed potatoes from certain third countries until 31 March 2014. The Committee gave a favourable opinion on the draft Commission Directive by qualified majority.

Vote: Qualified majority by 324 votes in favour, 7 votes against, 14 votes absent.

8. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Directive amending Council Directive 66/402/EEC as regards the conditions to be satisfied by the crop of *Oryza sativa*.** (Doc. SANCO/12387/2011) (Legal Base: Council Directive 66/402/EC, Article 21(a) (Opinion of the Committee via the examination procedure)

The Commission presented the proposal. Information and studies from the Member States have shown that there is a need to introduce a threshold for the presence of plants infected by *Fusarium fujikuroi* and to reduce the presence of wild or red-grain plants in the field. An exchange of views took place on the specific requirements proposed for *Fusarium fujikuroi* and red grain. The amended proposal will be finalised among the members of the expert working group and be voted on in the next Standing Committee.