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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, FORESTRY AND VINE
2 February 2012**

Chairperson: Ms Päivi Mannerkorpi

All the Member States were present. CPVO and Norway participated as observers.

- 1. Exchange of views on the working programme in the areas covered by the Standing Committee (agricultural seeds, seed potatoes, vegetable seeds and propagating material, forest reproductive material, material for vegetative propagation of vine) for the year 2012.**

The Commission presented the working programme. An exchange of views took place. A number of Member States asked for a temporary experiment on the extension of certification under official supervision, to field inspection for the pre-basic and basic categories of seed and for EU rules to be amended after the temporary experiment on the seed lot size (International Seed Trade Association). It was suggested by some Member States to update the rules on the size of official labels. The Commission also informed the Committee that the EU Council Decision on the equivalence of field inspections expires on 31 December 2012 and needs to be amended by then.

- 2. Seed treatment – latest developments of the EU legislation on plant protection products.**

The Commission gave a presentation on the latest developments of the EU legislation on plant protection products (Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009). The basic principle, as referred to in Article 49 of that Regulation, is that seeds can be treated in a Member State with a plant protection product (PPP) authorised for that use. Member States shall not prohibit the placing on the market and use of seeds treated with PPP authorised in at least one Member State. A guidance document on general principles, good practices, labelling and packaging of treated seed is under development. A first draft version of the document is expected to be delivered for comments to the members of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health - Section Plant Protection Products – Legislation and to members of the Standing Committee on Seeds by March 2012. At the same time the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) will also be consulted for comments.

3. Update on issues in the area of forest reproductive material.

The Commission informed that a Standing Committee meeting on forest reproductive material is planned for 2nd March 2012. Items concerning the supplier's document file, the technical aspects of the OECD scheme, the semantic web approach on FRM communication and the updating of the information to be provided, will be discussed at that meeting.

4. Update on possible amendments to Annexes I and II to the Council Directive on the marketing of seed potatoes.

The Commission briefly informed the Committee that work on Annexes I and II to the Council Directive on the marketing of seed potatoes will resume. The Commission invited all interested Member States that had not participated so far, to take part in the work. The Commission presented its plan to continue the work. The working group (BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, LU, NL, PT and UK) will start its work in March. The aim is to produce a draft proposal before the end of 2012.

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

The Commission briefly informed the Committee that internal work on finalising the impact assessment and preparing the draft legal proposal for a Regulation on Plant Reproductive Material is ongoing. The adoption of the proposal by the Commission is foreseen for 3rd quarter 2012.

6. Miscellaneous

- On 16 January 2012 the Commission received a notification from Italy in accordance with Article 11 of the Directive 2008/62/EC on conservation varieties of agricultural crops for the authorisation in respect of propagation of seed potatoes of the conservation variety *Riccione di Napoli* outside the area of its origin. For phytosanitary reasons there is a need to multiply potato seed in higher altitudes in the regions of Brunico and Camigliatello Silano. This is a first request of its kind under Article 11 of Directive 2008/62/EC. The Committee did not give any comments on the Italian request.
- The Italian delegate informed the Committee about the different recent activities of the United Nations-Economic Committee for Europe (UN-ECE) on seed potato standard as regards e.g. updating of the standards on internal defects (e.g. frost or technical damage), procedures for post-controls (guidelines), lot inspection methods, size of tubers and crop rotation. In 2012 the work should concentrate on statistical analysis, sampling (bulk), certification, varietal purity and micro-propagation (marketing categories), harmonisation of classes, number of generations (label) and virus tolerances. The next meeting of the UN-ECE specialised section on seed potatoes will take place on 31 May and 1 June 2012 directly after the World Potato Congress in Edinburgh, UK. The annual meeting will take place in March 2013.
- The French delegate proposed to update the requirements for the size of the official labels as they date back to the 1960's. The industrial processes have developed and barcodes are nowadays added to the labels. It was decided to create a small working group (AT, CZ, EE, FR, NL, PL) led by FR to prepare a document on the issue for the next Standing Committee meeting.

- The Slovenian delegate informed about the upcoming European Seed Certification Agencies Association (ESCAA) meeting on 20-22 June 2012 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

7. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision providing for the temporary marketing of seed of the *Triticum durum* Desf. variety Marialva not fulfilling the requirements of Council Directive 66/402/EEC as regards the number of seeds of other plant species. (Doc. SANCO/13086/2011) (Legal Base: Article 17(1) of Council Directive 66/402/EEC) (Opinion of the committee via the examination procedure)

The Commission presented the proposal. Portugal had informed about high rainfall conditions during the production cycle causing a poor growth of durum wheat in South Portugal. Therefore, Portugal had made a request to market seed of the variety Marialva of durum wheat under the procedure of Commission Regulation No 217/2006, on the authorisation for Member States to permit temporarily, the marketing of seed not satisfying the requirements in respect of the minimum germination and the presence of other plant species. To solve the problem of high number of seeds of soft wheat, Portugal should be authorised to temporarily permit the marketing of seed of the same variety not meeting the requirements of Directive 66/402/EEC as regards the maximum content of seeds of other cereal species for a period expiring on 29 February 2012. On the basis of the suggestions of some Member States the conditions were further specified by adding the requirement for the maximum content of soft wheat. The Committee gave a favourable opinion on the draft Commission Implementing Directive by unanimity.

Vote: Unanimous in favour.

8. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Directive amending Directives 2003/90/EC and 2003/91/EC setting out implementing measures for the purposes of Article 7 of Council Directives 2002/53/EC and 2002/55/EC respectively, as regards the characteristics to be covered as a minimum by the examination and the minimum conditions for examining certain varieties of agricultural plant species and vegetable species. (Doc. SANCO/13002/2011) (Legal Base: Article 7 of Council Directives 2002/53/EC and 2002/55/EC) (Opinion of the committee via the examination procedure)

The Commission presented the proposal. The Committee gave a favourable opinion on the draft Commission Implementing Directive by qualified majority.

Vote: Qualified majority by 338 votes in favour, 7 votes abstained.