

# EUROPEAN AGENDA: Agriculture, Livestock Farming and Fisheries

27 April - 13 May 2020

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## 13 May, Agriculture and Fisheries Council: COVID-19 impact



The **Croatian Presidency** organized a second videoconference of EU ministers responsible for agriculture and fisheries with the participation of EU Commissioners Janusz Wojciechowski and Virginijus Sinkevičius, to discuss measures already in force, as well as possible future actions on both national and European level in order to counteract **the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on agriculture and fisheries sector.**

In relation to **fisheries**, many Member States welcomed and appreciated quick adoption of the legislation allowing for additional support of the fisheries sector which has been hit by the COVID-19 epidemic.

Overall fishing activity by EU fishing fleet is significantly reduced, particularly for smaller vessels, and the market situation remains challenging. Some Member States called for additional measures and additional flexibilities, especially for obligations regarding ICCAT fishing season and control obligations.

Ministers called upon the Commission to continue to monitor the situation for both the fishing fleet and aquaculture and within any additional available funding will consider if further support measures are needed.

As regards the **agricultural production**, multiple rounds of measures were proposed, most of them already in force. However, we heard today clear messages and calls to the Commission to implement additional measures, both in terms of further relaxing the current **CAP rules**, for example in relation to the on-the-spot checks or the increase of the voluntary coupled support, but also those that would require further financial resources. Activation of the private storage and other market measures for sectors such as poultry, pig meat and veal, potatoes to name just a few, was also requested. In addition, some sectors that already received support will need additional measures, according to the ministers' interventions. This relates primarily to the **dairy and wine sector.**

Access to the [Press release video](#)

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## **13 May, Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development: Agricultural and food supply**

[Report](#) on “**Retailer Alliances in the Food and Agricultural Supply Chain**” which explains the activities of retailer alliances, their impact on the food supply chain and the legal framework that can be applied to their creation and activities.

Retailer alliances are horizontal coalitions of retailers, supermarket chains and cooperative retailer groups working together to combine activities such as collective sourcing.

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## **11 May, Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development: aid to the sector**

Following the meeting of the **Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development**, the European Parliament has drawn up a report on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the European Council laying down certain transitional provisions on support from the **European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)** and the **European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF)** for the year 2021 and amending Regulation (EU) No. 228/2013, (EU) No. 229/2013 and (EU) No. 1308/2013 as regards resources and their distribution for the year 2021 and amending Regulations (EU) No. 1305/2013, (EU) No. 1306/2013 and (EU) No. 1307/2013 as regards resources and their application for the year 2021 2019/0254(COD).

Access the [report](#)

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## **11 May, European Commission: new online catalogue of fruit plant varieties**

The EU legislation requires the setup of an EU catalogue of varieties of fruit plant propagating material and fruit plants based on Member States' national catalogues. Today the Commission's new [Fruit Reproductive Material Information System \(FRUMATIS\)](#) for the management of these national catalogues went online.

**FRUMATIS** currently lists more than 14.000 varieties of fruit plant propagating material and fruit plants. This new system allows Member States to manage themselves the publication of their national catalogues on the [Commission's website](#). FRUMATIS uses semantic technologies that allow it to connect to publicly available structured data sources. The Commission intends to create a **central hub of catalogues of agricultural and vegetable species, fruit genera/species and vine varieties**.

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## **4 May, European Commission: package of exceptional measures**

On 4th May the Commission published the **latest package of exceptional measures** to continue to support the agricultural and food sectors most affected by the coronavirus crisis. The exceptional measures (announced on 22 April) include private storage aid for the dairy and meat sectors, temporary authorisation for self-organisation of market measures by operators in the sectors most affected and flexibility in the implementation of market support programmes. In addition to these market measures, the Commission proposed to authorise Member States to use rural development funds to compensate farmers and small agri-food businesses for amounts up to EUR 5.000 and EUR 50.000 respectively. These measures come in addition to a large package of [measures previously adopted](#) by the Commission.

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## **29 April, the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) calls for an EU-wide milk volume reduction plan and compensation for producers**

Exceptional measures announced on 22 April, as a further response to the Coronavirus crisis include granting private storage aid, flexibility for market support programmes and exceptional derogation from EU competition rules. To lighten the burden of the coronavirus crisis laying on the shoulders of producers and the dairy industry and not to recreate a “mountains of milk”, a voluntary volume reduction scheme at EU level should be proposed which will help reducing the pressure on the milk prices. According to European Committee of the Regions (CoR), producers will have to be given enough compensation per litre of milk they do not produce, in order to face economic consequences.

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## **27 April, Commission updates import duties on maize, sorghum and rye**

Sustained low prices for maize worldwide and ample supply have led to a second update of import duties by the European Commission. The automatic mechanism calculating import duties was triggered on 27 April, setting the import duty on [maize, sorghum and rye at € 5.27 per tonne](#). The new calculation has led to a revised duty at € 10.40 per tonne.

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## **More information**

[News – Agriculture and Rural Development-policy to promote agri-food products](#)

[Press release – Agriculture and Rural Development-package of exceptional measures](#)

[Press release – Agriculture and Rural Development-Import duties](#)

[European Committee of the Regions – News-Milk volume reduction](#)