

Newsletter 8th legislature - Issue No 2/2017

Meeting of:
25 January 2017
9.00 – 12.30 – 15.00 – 18.30
Room PHS 1A002
-
26 January 2017
9.00 – 12.30
Room PHS 1A002



Highlights

Constitutive meeting: Election of the AGRI Chair and Vice-Chairs



Following the election of the new EP President last week, AGRI Members will elect their Chair and Vice-Chairs for the 2nd half of the parliamentary term. This election will take place at the very start of this constitutive meeting on Wednesday 25 January at 09.00h.

Priorities of the Maltese Presidency of the EU: exchange of views



Roderick Galdes, Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture of Malta, will present and debate with AGRI Members on Thursday 26 January at 9.00h the priorities of the Maltese Presidency of the EU for the first semester of 2017. These include among others monitoring agricultural markets and on-going trade negotiations, continuing trilogue negotiations on organic farming and reaching a compromise on the Omnibus proposal within Council in April.

Exchange of views with Brazilian Agriculture Minister Blairo Maggi



Brazilian Agriculture Minister Blairo Maggi, will address AGRI committee Members on Wednesday 25 January at 10.00h. This is a timely visit, since some Members have raised concerns over the possible impact of the future free trade agreement between the EU and Mercosur on specific agricultural sectors in the EU, for instance the beef sector. Mr Maggi's speech will be followed by a debate.

Influenza epidemic in the poultry sector: update by Commission



At the request of AGRI Members, a Commission representative from DG SANTE will update the Committee on the on-going Avian Influenza epizootics, a highly contagious viral infection which can affect all species of birds causing serious disease with high mortality. Outbreaks have mainly affected duck and geese farms situated in an area with a high density of holdings (Last item on the agenda on Wednesday morning 25 January).

Work in progress

Balancing financial instruments and grants in EU cohesion policy



Miguel Viegas (GUE-NGL, PT) will present his draft opinion on the « right funding mix for Europe's regions », for which the Regional Affairs Committee (REGI) is the lead committee (Presentation on 25 January after the votes). The issue at stake for the CAP is how new financial instruments - for example loans and loan guarantees, microfinance and equity and venture capital - can be used alongside direct payments to help farmers.

Organic farming: update on trilogue negotiations



Parliament's rapporteur Martin Häusling (Greens, DE) will update Members on the latest state-of-play in trilogue negotiations on the future regulation on organic farming (Last item on the agenda on Wednesday afternoon 25 January). 14 trilogues were held so far and Parliament, Council and Commission have come much closer to an agreement under the Slovak Presidency of the Union but some disagreements remain over a few key elements and negotiations will have to continue under the Maltese Presidency.

Temporary autonomous trade measures for Ukraine



Czesław Adam Siekierski (EPP, PL) will present his draft opinion to the Commission proposal for the introduction of temporary unilateral trade measures for Ukraine which raises, according to him, several issues of principle and of substance. The Rapporteur suggests the deletion by the AGRI Committee of tariff rate quotas (TRQs) proposed for products (wheat, maize and tomatoes) which are sectors currently facing a severe crisis in the EU. He fears that additional tariff free imports of such products from Ukraine could aggravate the hardship already suffered by EU producers (Debate on Thursday morning 26 January).

Initiative on resource efficiency: reducing food waste, improving food safety



Around 88 million tonnes of food is wasted annually in the EU, with associated costs estimated at €143 billion. AGRI will discuss the draft opinion by James Nicholson (ECR, UK) on the own-initiative report by the Committee on the Environment, Health and Food safety (ENVI) entitled "Initiative on resource efficiency: reducing food waste, improving food safety". Food waste prevention is as a priority area in the Circular Economy Package adopted by the Commission (Debate on Thursday morning 26 January).

Draft delegated act on rules for direct payments



The Commission will present to AGRI Members the modifications done to the delegated act on direct payments as regards the greening component of those payments. The reformed CAP introduced the green direct payment scheme (Last item on the agenda on Thursday morning 26 January). The Commission committed itself to reviewing one feature of this scheme, the ecological focus areas (EFA), after the first year of its implementation. The discussion with the national experts started in the summer last year and the presentation of the amended delegated act will be the last step before its official transmission to Parliament.

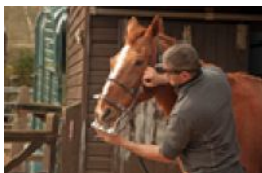
Votes on 25 January at 15.00

Minimum Standards for the Protection of Farm Rabbits



A total of 256 amendments have been tabled to the draft own-initiative report by Stefan Eck (GUE/NGL, DE) on minimum standards for the protection of farm rabbits. Almost 30 compromise amendments have been negotiated among the groups with a view to easing the vote.

Responsible ownership and care of equidae



A total of 259 amendments have been tabled to the draft own-initiative report by Julie Girling (ECR, UK) on responsible ownership and care of equidae. The rapporteur negotiated 31 compromises with shadow rapporteurs from other groups covering nearly all amendments.

Budgetary discharge 2015: AGRI opinion



73 amendments have tabled to the draft opinion by Peter Jahr (EPP, DE) on the discharge for the 2015 budgetary period. Seven compromises have been negotiated between the rapporteur and the shadow rapporteurs with a view to easing the vote.

Next committee meeting

27 February 2016 (15.00-18.30)

28 February 2017 (9.00-18.30)

Useful links

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