

EN

E-004509/2020

Answer given by Mr Wojciechowski
on behalf of the European Commission
(24.9.2020)

1. The Commission amended Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 to include an additional rural development measure¹ for exceptional temporary relief to farmers, including greenhouse growers, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) processing or marketing agricultural products particularly affected by the COVID crisis. Up to 2% of the Rural Development Programme (RDP) envelope may be reallocated to this measure, allowing lump sum payments of up to EUR 7 000 per farmer and EUR 50 000 per SME.

The Commission also adjusted a number of rules to support Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) beneficiaries², including increased advances in direct payments (from 50% to 70%) and in area- and animal-related rural development payments (from 75% to 85%)³, increased flexibility for national administration as regards on-the-spot controls and a 1-month extension of the deadline for CAP payment applications.

Other measures adopted on 30 April 2020⁴ include private storage aid for certain dairy and meat products, flexibility in the implementation of market support programmes (including on green harvesting rules in certain sectors) and derogations from certain competition rules under Article 222 of Regulation (EU) 1308/2013⁵ for the milk, flowers and potatoes sectors. Withdrawal of products from the market through free distribution is therefore a possible option in some sectors.

A summary of all measures can be found on the EU website dedicated to the COVID crisis⁶ response.

2. The Managing Authority of the Greek RDP programme may request rapid modification to introduce measures mitigating COVID effects.

3. Support under the CAP is implemented under shared management with the Member States, in line with Article 63 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046⁷.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2020/872 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2020 amending Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 as regards a specific measure to provide exceptional temporary support under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, OJ L 204/1, 26.6.2020

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/food-farming-fisheries/farming/documents/factsheet-covid19-agriculture-food-sectors_en.pdf

³ Farmers will start receiving these advances from mid-October 2020

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2020:140:TOC>

⁵ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p 671-854, Regulation (EU) 1308/2013

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/food-farming-fisheries/farming/documents/factsheet-covid19-agriculture-food-sectors_en.pdf

⁷ The Financial Regulation