

CIAA Flash

Publication addressed to CIAA members

Highlight

Mr Jean Martin re-elected as President of CIAA -Today in Paris the Board of Directors re-elected CIAA president Jean Martin for a third term of office. After thanking members for their confidence, Jean Martin spoke about the need to build on what CIAA has worked on over the past few years. "The big issues remain," he said. "A constructive dialogue with both European and international institutions is fundamental in bringing the industry forward. Industry competitiveness, addressing trade imbalances, getting WTO negotiations back on track, growth and employment, better regulation, improved innovation and research, nutrition and health - these are all policy areas where CIAA is playing and will continue to play an important role in the time ahead".

European Technology Platform (ETP)

ETP 'Food for Life' online consultation enters final weeks - The European Technology Platform 'Food for Life' online consultation aimed at gathering qualitative input from a broad range of experts in order to pinpoint the key challenges for the Platform, will draw to a close on 01/12. The information obtained from the consultation will feed the creation of the ETP 'Food for Life' Strategic Research Agenda (SRA), due to be published in April 2007. The SRA will define themes and priorities for future research and proposed for inclusion as priorities of the 7th Framework Programme.

We would like to encourage members to participate in the online consultation.

In order to do so, please click on the following link:
<http://etp.ciaa.be/webconsultation/welcome.asp>.

All documents relating to ETP 'Food for Life' are available on <http://etp.ciaa.be>

GM rice

Standing Committee backs Commission Decision on strict counter testing of US rice imports

A draft Commission Decision imposing mandatory counter testing for unauthorised GMOs in all imports of US long grain rice was endorsed on 24/10 by Member State experts in the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. The decision follows the lack of agreement by the US authorities to a common sampling and testing protocol which would ensure a high level of consistency and accuracy in the tests for the unauthorised GM rice LLRICE601 in consignments to the EU. The measures are being taken in response to findings four weeks ago of LLRICE601 in shipments of US long grain rice, which had been certified as free from this unauthorised GMO. On 04/10, the European Commission gave Commissioner Kyprianou the mandate to introduce this counter testing, but first allowed 15 days to seek US agreement on a common approach to sampling and testing. Despite extensive discussions between both sides, the US was unable to agree on the proposed protocol. US long grain rice imports will continue to be subject to the

certification requirements imposed when LL601 was first reported to be present in US rice in August. Under the draft Decision agreed by the Standing Committee on the 24/10, in addition to this certification requirement, all consignments of US long-grain rice will also be sampled and tested at the point of entry to the EU by Member State authorities according to the EU testing protocol attached to the proposed decision. Responsibility for the cost of this additional testing will lie with operators. The counter tests will also take into account the French authorities' recent finding of another unauthorised GMO, LLRICE62, in US rice; the tests to be applied will also detect this GM event. The draft Commission Decision is now subject to adoption by the college of Commissioners, before it can be published in the official journal.

Revision of the Waste Framework Directive

Following the tabling of more than 622 amendments on the revision of WFD revision in the Parliament's ENVI Committee, rapporteur Jackson on 10/10 announced to propose a series of compromise amendments in view of the ENVI Committee vote on 28/11. CIAA strongly favours these compromise amendments also to include by-products. On 17/10, Jackson issued an informal proposal for a compromise amendment on by-products, which is fully based on the current Finnish proposal on by-products in the Council. CIAA developed a common statement with Eurelectric on the Jackson proposal and held personal meetings in the offices of MEPs Jackson, Korhola and Murko. CIAA also formally contacted MEP Sacconi (shadow rapporteur PSE group) to comment on the proposal and to stress the importance of a legal clarification on by-products. Jackson and the shadow rapporteurs of the other groups will decide by 26/10 whether agreement on a compromise amendment on by-products can be found.

At the same time, the Council is discussing by-products on the basis of a Finnish proposal of 14/09 (Article 4a). The Finnish Presidency is currently preparing a revised draft text for presentation in one of the following Council working group meetings. In parallel, DG ENV is continuing to draft its guidance

Communication on by-products and intends to include a specific chapter on by-products from the food & drink sector. DG ENV intends to publish this Communication by the end of January 2007.

Agriculture

State aid -The Commission is currently reviewing state aid in the agri-food sector for the period of 2007-2013 because both the Community Guidelines for state aid in the agricultural sector (2000/C 232/10) and the exemption regulation (No.1 /2004) expire at the end of this year. In 07/2006, several Member States expressed concerns that the set of rules proposed would cause major disruption in the operation of state aid in the agricultural sector. Among the various proposals, the complete abolition of advertising aid inside the EU and the exclusion of processing and marketing industries were criticized. At the October Agriculture Council, the French delegation, supported by other delegations, requested the Commission to reconsider certain aspects of the proposal. The Commission convened

an experts' meeting today 25/10/06 to address the concerns of Member States.

Trade

EU-China - The EC released on 24/10 a EU-China strategy paper on trade and investment as part of a wider Global Europe trade framework presented beginning this month. The bilateral trade policy initiative is considered necessary as trade flows with China doubled in the last 5 years, although trade with China is still guided by a partnership and cooperation agreement dating from 1985. The new approach foresees incorporating "a broad partnership of principles and values" according to EU Trade Commissioner Mandelson. The policy proposal endorses openness in trade in accordance with WTO rules, and also pushes for better IPR enforcement, open procurement markets, and social, environmental or safety standards in China.

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