

CIAA Flash

Publication addressed to CIAA members

Highlight

European Ministerial Conference on Counteracting Obesity - 15-17 November 2006, Istanbul
WHO Regional Office for Europe organised a Ministerial Conference on Counteracting Obesity in collaboration with the European Commission on 15-17 November in Istanbul. On 16 November, Dr Marc Danzon, WHO Regional Director for Europe, and Professor Recep Akdag, Minister of Health of the Republic of Turkey, signed a European Charter on behalf of all of the Member States in the WHO European Region. The European Charter on Counteracting Obesity sets the ultimate goal of curbing the epidemic and reversing the current trend in the Region. To translate the framework provided in the Charter, WHO EU is working on the development of an Action Plan for Europe which should be finalised by spring next year.

Claims/addition of nutrients

On 21/11, the EP ENVI Committee adopted the Scheele and Poli Bortone draft reports on amending the addition of vitamins and minerals and claims regulations in order for them to conform to the new comitology provisions. The Committee unanimously adopted a number of amendments extending the time limits and areas where the EP has a veto right over implementing decisions. The 2 reports will now go to the 11-14/12 plenary session for final adoption.

European Food Safety Authority

Commission launches consultation on fees for EFSA
The Commission recently launched a consultation process on fees for EFSA for processing authorisation files to which we are invited to send comments:

The consultation paper can be found here:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/consultations/index_en.htm

The consultation paper will be used as a basis for discussion by DG SANCO's Advisory Group on the Food Chain and Animal and Plant Health. It will also form the basis for detailed discussions with EFSA and EU Member States.

CIAA would like to encourage its members to respond to this consultation process and we are happy to coordinate responses if so desired. Direct contributions can also be sent to: SANCO-EFSA-fees@ec.europa.eu

Deadline for contributions is: 15 February 2007.

Revision of WFD - By-products

In her revised compromise amendment package of 16/11, C. Jackson, rapporteur on the WFD withdrew her original compromise amendment on by-products due to the strong opposition of the PSE in the ENVI Committee. EPP and ALDE alone, who are in favour of a clear by-product amendment, do not hold a majority in the ENVI Committee. The new compromise amendment on by-products only calls for interpretative Commission guidelines based on existing jurisprudence, which are expected to be

published within the next few weeks. The proposal leaves the option of legislation on by-products to the Commission, should it consider guidelines insufficient in the long run. CIAA rejects this proposal as it does not open any opportunity for legal certainty within the next 5-10 years.

However, this new compromise package has been agreed on by the rapporteurs of the EPP, PSE and ALDE groups. CIAA responded with a series of position letters to all key MEPs involved in the debate, calling upon MEPs to keep their individual amendments on by-products up for vote and to reject the compromise amendment. A general letter to all MEPs in the ENVI Committee has been submitted. Also, CIAA liaised with other industry sectors, which responded by submitting a series of individual letters to the EP. However, the chances for a positive Committee vote on by-products next week seem very slim as MEPs usually stick to compromise agreements hammered out by their group leaders.

In view of the ENVI Committee vote on 28/11, CIAA will continue keeping up the pressure on MEPs to clarify that the issue of by-products is of key relevance and that industry will not back down on the issue. The full mobilisation of forces, including national federations and sectors, is also foreseen between the ENVI Committee and plenary vote scheduled in February. CIAA is also in the stage of implementing a fully-fledged lobbying strategy vis-à-vis the Council in order to ensure that their current position on by-products - which is fully in line with the CIAA position - is remained until political agreement is reached in 1st reading. The latest version of the Finnish Presidency text on by-products reflects major improvements which have been suggested by CIAA in a former comment on the initial Finnish proposal.

Trade

WTO - World Trade Organization Director General P. Lamy announced at an informal Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) on 16/11 that chairs of all committees resume work. He stressed that it will be

up to each chair to determine how to proceed and that negotiations will be supported by numerous bilateral and plurilateral meetings. In order to advance negotiations, agricultural chair C. Falconer invited on 10/11 to a "transparency forum" in order to start negotiations on key agricultural issues.

Better regulation

The Commission's annual review of its Better Regulation approach has been launched on 14/11 with the publication of two major documents, a Communication on " A Strategic Review of Better Regulation in the EU" and the "First Progress Report

on the Strategy for the Simplification of the Regulatory Environment". The Communication briefly assesses the progress that has been made so far in the 2005 'Better Regulation' Programme and proposes further action (CPT/040/06). In particular, the Spring European Council 2007 will be asked to endorse a 25% target for the reduction of EU and national administrative burdens. The progress report reviews the scheduled action plan and the state of progress of all pieces of legislation that are under scrutiny for simplification, recast or codification (CPT/038/06).

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