



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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Agriculture and Fisheries

Luxembourg, 22-23 June 2009

President

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Czech Minister for Agriculture

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Main results of the Council

The Council adopted conclusions on areas with natural handicaps and on the quality of agricultural products.

The Council reached political agreement on a proposed regulation on the welfare of animals at the time of slaughter or killing.

The Council adopted without discussion a regulation strengthening type-approval requirements for the general safety of motor vehicles in the EU.

PARTICIPANTS

The Governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Ms Sabine LARUELLE

Minister for SMEs, the Self-Employed, Agriculture and Science Policy

Mr Kris PEETERS

Minister-President of the Flemish Government and Flemish Minister for Institutional Reform, Ports, Agriculture, Sea Fisheries and Rural Policy

Mr Benoît LUTGEN

Minister for Agriculture, Rural Affairs, the Environment and Tourism (Walloon Region)

Bulgaria:

Mr Valeri TSVETANOV

Minister for Agriculture and Food Supply

Czech Republic:

Mr Jakub ŠEBESTA

Minister for Agriculture

Mr Ivo HLAVÁČ

State Secretary for Agriculture

Denmark:

Ms Eva Kjer HANSEN

Minister for Food

Germany:

Ms Ilse AIGNER

Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection

Mr Gert LINDEMANN

State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection

Estonia:

Mr Gert ANTSU

Deputy Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr Brendan SMITH

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Greece:

Mr Konstantinos KILTIDIS

State Secretary for Rural Development and Food

Spain:

Ms Elena ESPINOSA MANGANA

Minister for Minister for the Environment and the Rural and Marine Environment

Mr José Luis MARTÍNEZ-GUIJARRO

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Autonomous Community of Castile-La Mancha

France:

Mr Michel BARNIER

Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries

Italy

Mr Luca ZAIA

Minister for Agricultural and Forestry Policy

Cyprus:

Mr Michalis POLYNIKI CHARALAMBIDES

Minister for Agriculture

Ms Octavie MODERT

State Secretary for Relations with Parliament, State Secretary for Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development, State Secretary for Culture, Higher Education and Research

Latvia:

Mr Jānis DŪKLAVS

Minister for Agriculture

Lithuania:

Mr Kazimieras STARKEVIČIUS

Minister for Agriculture

Luxembourg:

Mr Fernand BODEN

Minister for Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development, Minister for Small and Medium-sized Businesses, the Liberal Professions and the Self-Employed, Tourism and Housing

Hungary:

Mr József GRÁF

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

Malta:

Mr George PULLICINO

Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs

Netherlands:

Ms Gerda VERBURG

Minister for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

Austria:

Mr Nikolaus BERLAKOVICH

Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, the
Environment and Water Management

Pologne:

Mr Marek SAWICKI

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

Portugal:

Mr Jaime SILVA

Minister for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries

Romania:

Mr Ilie SĂRBU

Minister of Agriculture, Forests and Rural Development

Slovenia:

Mr Milan POGAČNIK

Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Food

Slovakia:

Mr Ján SLABÝ

State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture

Finland:

Ms Sirkka-Liisa ANTILA

Minister for Agriculture and Forestry

Sweden:

Mr Eskil ERLANDSSON

Mr Rolf ERIKSSON

Minister for Agriculture

State Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture

United Kingdom:

Mr Jim FITZPATRICK

Minister of State for Food, Farming and the Environment

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Commission:

Ms Mariann FISCHER BOEL

Member

PROTECTION OF ANIMALS AT THE TIME OF KILLING

The Council reached political agreement on a regulation improving welfare of animals at slaughter ([13312/08](#)).

The regulation aims at revising the legislation in force - Council Directive 93/119/EC on the protection of animals at the time of killing or slaughter in the light of new technical and scientific elements. It also introduces a new approach - mirroring the one followed in food safety field - increasing operator's responsibilities concerning welfare.

Directive 93/119/EC had not been substantially amended since its adoption although Community food safety legislation applicable to slaughterhouses, as well as hygiene rules for food of animal origin had meanwhile been profoundly amended by the adoption of several regulations in this field¹, including animal welfare requirements and checks for conformity.

The approved regulation aims therefore at reviewing the legislation with the following main objectives:

- to address new animal welfare concerns avoiding pain and minimising distress or suffering for the animals, in particular establishing more humane killing practices in case of eradication for contagious diseases;
- to update the stunning/killing requirements taking into account the most recent scientific data;
- to simplify the legislative framework in line with the food safety regulations by increasing operators' responsibilities.

Specific differences introduced by the new regulation:

- changing from a directive to a regulation: it provides for uniform and simultaneous application, avoiding administrative burdens and inequalities sometimes due to national transpositions and allowing faster implementation. It also establishes a single set of rules that will be more clear and easier to apply both for EU operators and trading partners;
- better integration of animal welfare concerns into the production process through the requirement of Standard Operating Procedures for operators and the appointment of Animal Welfare Officers in slaughterhouses to assist them in ensuring compliance with the rules laid down in the regulation;

¹ Regulations (EC) No 852/2004, 853/2004, 854/2004 and 882/2004 respectively.

- increasing the level of competence of the operators and officials concerned, proper training and delivering of certificates of competence for personnel involved in killing and related operations;
- updating of a number of technical standards in view of scientific progress;
- regular monitoring of stunning techniques efficiency;
- upgrade of the standards governing slaughterhouse construction and equipment. Animal welfare taken on board in the design of slaughterhouses;
- promotion of innovation and a common approach in relation to stunning and killing techniques;
- improving protection of animals during mass killing operations;
- in case of meat imported from third countries, an attestation accompanying the health certificate will be required, certifying that requirements at least equivalent to those laid down in Chapters II and III of the regulation have been met.

Community rules on animal welfare are among the strictest worldwide and intend to minimising distress and avoiding pain throughout the slaughtering process.

In 2004 and 2006 the European Food Safety Authority produced two scientific opinions suggesting a review of the legislation in force, to take into account the new technologies which had been developed. In addition, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) adopted in 2007 the Terrestrial Animal Health Code which includes guidelines for the slaughter of animals and for the killing of animals for disease control purposes.

Every year, nearly 360 million pigs, sheep, goats and cattle as well as several billion poultry are slaughtered in EU for their meat. In addition, about 25 million animals are killed for their fur. The control of contagious diseases may also require the culling of thousands to millions of other animals.