



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL
ON THE APPLICATION OF THE SYSTEM
APPLICABLE TO CERTAIN GRAIN LEGUMES

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ON THE APPLICATION OF THE SYSTEM **APPLICABLE TO CERTAIN GRAIN LEGUMES**

This report is presented under Article 6(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1577/96¹, which stipulates that after three marketing years the Commission is to make a report on the application of the above system, accompanied, where necessary, by appropriate proposals.

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE SYSTEM

“Grain legumes” describes crops of lentils, chick peas and vetches harvested as dry seeds. Such crops are eligible for a specific Community support measure introduced in 1989 by Regulation (EEC) No 762/89² for an initial period of three marketing years ending on 30 June 1992.

The measure consisted in Community aid per hectare sown and harvested, fixed annually by the Commission. In 1989 it was ECU 75 (ex-green ecu) per hectare within a maximum guaranteed Community area (MGA) of 300 000 ha, equivalent to the average of the area cultivated in the Community in the 1985/86, 1986/87 and 1987/88 marketing years. An overrun in the MGA gave rise to a reduction in the aid for the following marketing year.

The measure was extended several times. The conclusions of the December 1993 Council mentioned the intention to gradually strengthen the current system and, as a result, the Commission increased the aid in stages until it reached ECU 150 (ex-green ecu) per hectare in 1995/96.

The current system (Regulation (EC) No 1577/96) continues the main aspects of the 1989 system. The aid was maintained at the level for the 1995/96 marketing year, ECU 181 including the switch-over coefficient ($150 \times 1.207509 = \text{ECU } 181$). There were two key changes: the MGA was increased to 400 000 ha and the aid reduction resulting from an overrun of the MGA was from that time on applied during the marketing year in question. Regulation (EC) No 1577/96 was then amended by Regulation (EC) No 1826/97³ to take account of a change in the nomenclature for leguminous vegetables.

Aid applications lodged by producers are dealt with by the integrated administration and control system (IACS), in application of

¹ OJ L 206, 16.8.1996, p. 4.

² OJ L 80, 23.3.1989, p. 76.

³ OJ L 260, 23.9.1997, p. 11.

Regulation (EEC) No 3508/92⁴, as are all area aids granted under the common agricultural policy.

2. APPLICATION OF THE SYSTEM

During the three marketing years covered by this report (1996/97, 1997/98 and 1998/99) the MGA has been consistently exceeded, by 37.44%, 23.54% and 10.08% respectively.

As a result the basic aid (ECU 181/ha) has been reduced proportionately, in accordance with the rules governing an overrun of the MGA. The final amounts of the aid were ECU 131.69/ha, ECU 146.51/ha and ECU 164.42/ha respectively. Details of land under grain legumes, MGA overruns and the final aid amounts are shown in the table in Annex I.

3. POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE SYSTEM

Several improvements to the system were suggested during the course of the period covered by this report.

Some involved a radical recasting of the system which would mean additional budget funds, such as increasing the MGA or adding new crops. They must be omitted in the current context.

The question of inclusion in the arable crops system was raised during the Agenda 2000 discussions. This is of no great interest to traditional producers of lentils, chick peas and vetches because it could result in a degree of displacement of those crops without really simplifying the system. That option was not considered when Agenda 2000 was adopted and should not be considered now.

Lastly, through a written question (No 3919/97) the European Parliament drew the Commission's attention to significant overruns in the MGA caused by an increase in land under vetches, a crop used for animal feed, while the other two crops are for human foodstuffs. The point was made that the combined nomenclature code seemed wrong. In its reply given on 6 January 1998⁵ the Commission indicated that it would "study the classification of these two species of vetch in detail and, if necessary, propose an amendment to the legislation".

4. PROPOSAL

After verification it was found that the combined nomenclature code ex 0713 90 90 was correct. It describes part of the heading 0713 "Dried leguminous vegetables, shelled, whether or not skinned or split" since the

⁴ OJ L 355, 5.12.1992, p. 1.

⁵ OJ C 187, 16.6.1998, p. 89.

vetches are harvested as seeds. Vetches harvested green in the form of fodder are found under code 1214 and are not eligible under the present system. Since vetches are not explicitly mentioned under 0713 the subheading 0713 90 “Other” needs to be used: it has a subdivision 0713 90 10 for seeds intended for sowing. In the case of vetches, seeds for sowing are found under CN code 1209 29 10. They are not eligible for the present system but may be covered by the rules governing seeds. Thus for vetches harvested as seeds for animal feed the CN code 0713 90 90 applies. There is no need to correct the regulation.

The Commission therefore feels that the system should continue in its present form: an MGA of 400 000 ha and aid at EUR 181/ha. However, MGA overruns demonstrate that developments in cultivated area need to be better managed.

To achieve that, the Commission proposes to take account of the different uses of the products: human food for lentils and chick peas and animal feed for vetches. The relative proportion of areas for which aid has been requested since application of the measure started is given in Annex II, which shows that on average lentils and chick peas accounted for some 40% of the area aided and vetches for 60%. The Commission proposes to subdivide the MGA on that basis, giving 160 000 ha and 240 000 ha respectively. Unused hectares in one MGA during a marketing year would be reallocated to the other MGA before an overrun occurred.

Lastly, the Commission also proposes to change the competent management committee so as to align the regulation with practice by replacing the Management Committee for Dried Fodder with the Management Committee for Cereals.

ANNEX I

GRAIN LEGUMES

Area for which aid has been requested
Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 1644/96

Area (ha)

	Lentils			Chick peas			Vetches			Total		
	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
Belgium												
Denmark												
Germany												
Greece	321	488	476	858	1.048	1.054	2.957	5.197	4.619	4.136	6.733	6.148
Spain	45.436	27.869	23.944	126.446	93.435	98.756	363.698	337.099	259.109	535.581	458.402	381.808
France	4.213	4.319	4.698	603	731	536	20	283	298	4.836	5.333	5.532
Ireland												
Italy	676	1.549	2.498	618	6.306	8.526	1.780	14.352	30.595	3.074	22.207	41.619
Luxembourg												
Netherlands												
Austria	15		5	9	15	9	41	71	70	66	86	85
Portugal	2	27	3	1.717	1.190	4.471	353	152	657	2.072	1.369	5.131
Finland												
Sweden							10		2	10		2
United Kingdom	0	29	0	0		0	0		0		29	
EC 15	50.663	34.281	31.623	130.252	102.725	113.352	368.860	357.153	295.350	549.774	494.159	440.325

ANNEX II

GRAIN LEGUMES

Area for which aid has been requested

(ha)

	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	Average
Lentils and chick peas	123.923	85.537	77.387	66.598	53.287	84.368	149.618	180.915	137.006	144.975	110.361
Vetches	72.654	60.024	82.796	64.332	53.843	114.746	219.042	368.860	357.153	295.350	168.880
Total	196.577	145.561	160.183	130.930	107.130	199.114	368.660	549.774	494.159	440.325	279.241
Lentils and chick peas (%)	63%	59%	48%	51%	50%	42%	41%	33%	28%	33%	40%
Vetches (%)	37%	41%	52%	49%	50%	58%	59%	67%	72%	67%	60%

