Subject: Re: Effects of the COVID-19 measures on the potato sector in Europe and call for DG AGRI to support the sector

Ref.: Your letter PDT (21)290 of 11/02/2021 Ares (2021)1195810

Dear Mr[Art.4.1(b)],

Thank you for your letters of 11th February\(^1\) in which you express concerns regarding the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the processed potatoes market.

Let me firstly assure you that the Commission fully understands your concerns in this long lasting difficult situation. The Member States, the Commission and all actors in the food chain are working hard to restore a balanced market situation.

You requested the European Commission to renew or prolong the application of Article 222 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013\(^2\) granting exemption from competition rules on 'agreements and decisions during periods of severe imbalance in markets' in order to be able to carry out indispensable measures to stabilise the sector with all legal certainty.

We have carefully examined the information that you, the French potatoes sector and the French administration kindly provided on the consequences of the Covid-19 crisis on the

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\(^1\) Ares(2021)1195810

potato market. Considering that this information reflects a persisting period of severe imbalance in the processed potato market, my services are actively reviewing the case for the renewal of the exemption in question. We will of course keep Member States and stakeholders informed of developments.

Yours sincerely,

Wolfgang BURTSCHER

Contact:

C.C.

Electronically signed on 22/02/2021 13:04 (UTC+01) in accordance with article 11 of Commission Decision C(2006) 4489