Subject: Meeting with Spanish Cooperatives on olive oil 10 February 2021

Participants: Art. 4.1(b) Privacy

DG Art. 4.1(b) Privacy

The objective of this meeting was to discuss current issues related to the olive oil sector in Spain.

On the market situation, Art. 4.1(b) Privacy considered that lower than expected yields due to climate conditions in Spain have significantly reduced the expected harvest for this marketing year, from 1.6 million tonnes to 1.45 million tonnes. This decrease is already affecting prices, which seem to be recovering after three difficult campaigns for farmers.

Art. 4.1(b) Privacy confirmed the tendency for an earlier harvest in Spain, as prices for these type of extra virgin oils have increased recently. In fact, Spanish Cooperativas pay farmers a higher price for olives harvested earlier. Of course, there is work to be done in order to convince farmers to focus on quality. He also confirmed the expansion of super-intensive olive groves on previous arable land and the difficulties for traditional olive groves to compete. In case of good climatic conditions, it is more than possible a 2 million tonnes campaign in Spain.

Art. 4.1(b) Privacy complained on the current panel test system, as a source of legal uncertainty for olive oil producers. He proposes a system that certifies the quality in origin through an official panel test. That certification would remain valid for a year, relishing the producer of any responsibility in case of a non-conformity in that period. He also highlighted the importance of a mandatory traceability system to ensure quality and accountability in the sector.

Cooperativas' representatives shared their concerns on the future Nutriscore system and its impact on olive oil. DG AGRI representatives invited Cooperativas to take part on the public consultation currently on-going for these new initiatives on front of pack and Nutriscore. They were also invited to take part on the inception impact assessment of the revision on marketing standards.

Finally, DG AGRI representatives informed of the on-going study on yields of olive trees and the recently implemented transparency initiative. Cooperatives thanked the Commission for these initiatives, as well as the positive opinion on the activation of Article 209 for olive oil cooperatives in Spain and the inclusion of Article 167a on the CAP transitional regulation.
Art. 4.1(b)

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