

GARCIA LOPEZ BERGES Victor (TRADE)

Subject: Read-out: meeting with FEDIOL, 10 January 2014

Importance: High

From: MISKIEWICZ Magdalena (AGRI)

Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2014 2:45 PM

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FEDIOL is a federation representing the European Vegetable Oil and Proteinmeal Industry in Europe.

At the FEDIOL executive board meeting, the representative of DG TRADE, accompanied by DG AGRI, gave an overview of the TTIP negotiations, emphasising the significant economic importance of the trade deal. FEDIOL enquired possible changes to rules of origin, GMOs, prospects for cooperation with the US on biotechnology even further than in CETA as well as the US interest in the RED directive. The sector does not have offensive interests. Being dependent on the supplies of oilseeds, it seeks access to these raw materials without barriers such as restrictions with respect to GMOs. As the US side has a competitive crushing industry, FEDIOL would rather be in favour of a staged (not immediate) liberalization of crude oils even though the current tariffs are quite low.

Participants:

FEDIOL: [ART 4.1b], [ART 4.1b], [ART 4.1b], [ART 4.1b] and other representatives of Member organizations (ADM, Bunge, Cereal Docks, Cargill, AAK, Cereal Docks)

COM: DG TRADE: Zoltan Somogyi; DG AGRI: Magdalena Miskiewicz (A1)

Details:

ZS (DG TRADE) gave a general overview of the on-going process of TTIP against the backdrop of the Bali process and other on-going FTAs. He invoked key economic figures regarding the impact of TTIP on the European economy. On agriculture, he stressed the expected gains to be achieved in particular through the elimination of NTBs, a successful outcome on GIs and in the wine sector while the EU agricultural sensitivities are also well known and will be properly dealt with during the negotiations. As regards GMO he informed the sector that this subject is a regulatory aspect, recalling however Barroso's statement on no compromise in EU safety standards.

The stakeholder had the following questions/comments:

- On rules of origin: are they going to be changed, in particular as regards the rules on conferring the origin in crushing and refining
- Crude oils (soybean oil, maize oil): even though the current tariffs are low, the industry would prefer staging instead of immediate liberalization as the US has a competitive crushing industry
- GMOs and biotechnology: would prefer to find a middle ground in the discussion on GMOs, [NOT RELEASABLE]
- RED directive: what are US concerns, how is the subject treated in TTIP; the concept of sustainable agriculture should be considered in TTIP
- Access to the US market: no offensive export interest, sector is interested in supplies of oilseeds

ZS informed the sector that the discussions on rules of origin are still exploratory at the moment. As regards tariffs, ZS hinted that the deal is supposed to be ambitious, thus a substantial number of tariffs would have to be liberalized at entry into force particularly those with low ad valorem values. On GMOs and biotechnology – there is still some room for improvement as regards raising awareness; we can look into the possibility of having cooperation in research (e.g. through European Innovation Partnership), an idea already raised with the US. It was clearly emphasised, as it has been communicated at the launch of TTIP, that basic rules in these fields will not be subjects for negotiations. The RED issue still remains an open question for the Commission on whether and how far that can be linked to the discussion in TTIP as the relevant legislation in place already provides various alternative solutions. DG ENER is on the lead for this file. ZS invited the industry to send their official position to the COM.

The industry finalized its position later after the meeting (received by COM via email on 15 Jan).

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