

European Communities

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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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# Working Documents

1976 - 1977

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4 June 1976

DOCUMENT 125/76

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 95/76) for a directive concerning the statistical surveys to be carried out by the Member States in order to determine the production potential of plantations of certain types of fruit

Rapporteur: Mr L. MARTENS

PE 44.630/fin.

1.2.2  
English Edition

521/11-91/13



By letter of 30 April 1976 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty, to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a directive concerning statistical surveys to be carried out by the Member States in order to determine the production potential of plantations of certain types of fruit.

The President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Agriculture as the committee responsible and the Committee on Budgets as the committee asked for its opinion.

The Committee on Agriculture appointed Mr McDonald rapporteur on 18 May 1976. Mr McDonald was replaced by Mr Martens on 19 May 1976.

It considered this proposal at its meeting of 18 and 19 May 1976.

At the same meeting the committee unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution and the explanatory statement.

The following were present : Mr Liogier, vice-chairman and acting chairman; Mr Vetrone, vice-chairman; Mr Martens, rapporteur; Mrs Dunwoody, Mr Hughes, Mr Früh, Mr Kofoed, Mr Ligios, Lord St. Oswald, Mr Scott-Hopkins, Mr Suck and Lord Walston.

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The Committee on Agriculture hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement :

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a directive concerning the statistical surveys to be carried out by the Member States in order to determine the production potential of plantations of certain types of fruit

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (COM(76) 147 final),
- having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. 95/76),
- having regard to the report by the Committee on Agriculture and the opinion of the Committee on Budgets (Doc. 125/76);

1. Approves the Commission's proposal;
2. Emphasizes that statistical surveys of fruit trees are essential to bring greater stability to the fruit tree sector and to ensure that Community funds are spent in the most effective manner;
3. Urges the Commission to supervise the progress of surveys so as to ensure that deadlines are respected.

Proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a directive concerning the statistical surveys to be carried out by the Member States in order to determine the production potential of plantations of certain types of fruit

Preamble, recital and Articles 1 to 7 unchanged

Article 8

The Commission shall submit to the Council, within 12 months after notification of the results by Member States, a report on experience acquired during the first survey in the enlarged Community; the Commission shall also provide the Council from 1 January 1977, with annual reports on the subject of Articles 5 and 6. The Commission shall, where appropriate, submit proposals to the Council with a view to the harmonisation of the methods used by the Member States. The Council shall act on these proposals in accordance with the voting procedure laid down in Article 43(2) of the Treaty.

Article 8

The Commission shall submit to the European Parliament and the Council, within 12 months after notification of the results by Member States, a report on experience acquired during the first survey in the enlarged Community; the Commission shall also provide the European Parliament and the Council, from 1 January 1977, with annual reports on the subject of Articles 5 and 6. The Commission shall, where appropriate, submit proposals to the Council with a view to the harmonisation of the methods used by the Member States. The Council shall act on these proposals in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 43(2) of the Treaty.

Articles 9 to 12 unchanged

<sup>1</sup> For full text see COM(76) 147 final

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTThe purpose of the Commission's proposal

1. The purpose of the present proposal is to introduce a number of modifications to existing texts laying down the conditions for the carrying out of statistical surveys of fruit trees, and in particular :

- to provide for a second survey to take place in 1977 and the results transmitted to the Commission in 1978;
- to simplify the surveys, by limiting these to important species and deleting the obligation to include irrigation within the survey;
- and to define the role played by the Standing Committee for Agricultural Statistics in drawing up the surveys, and procedure to be adopted within that Committee.

Fruit tree sector

2. The fruit tree sector is one in which serious structural surpluses have existed for a number of years. A significantly large proportion of the production of certain varieties of apples, pears, peaches and oranges are sold into intervention, up to 20% or more for certain varieties in certain years, without, however, sufficient stability being introduced into the Community market for these products.

This results in cost to the EAGGF which is not negligible : withdrawals for the last three years required 200 m.u.a., and expenditure in 1976 can be expected to rise; moreover the cost of supplementary measures to avoid crises due to surplus production amounts to 80 m.u.a. for grubbing up operations.

3. Any measure to achieve stability in this sector, however, depends on adequate information on production and market trends. Investments for replanting are relatively high and a number of years are required before orchards reach full production. Producers will not make such commitments, nor should Community funds be allocated, for redirecting or converting production without a large degree of certitude as to future production trends.

In order to act effectively, on the basis of accurate information on medium term trends, the Commission should have at its disposal exact information on the potential production of Community orchards.

Directive 71/286/EEC

4. Consequently, in 1971, by Directive 71/286/EEC<sup>1</sup>, provision was made for statistical surveys to be carried out by Member States for dessert apples, dessert pears, peaches and oranges : at that time only a few Member States carried out such enquiries and the results did not allow for precise and comparative conclusions to be drawn.
5. Common criteria were established, with surveys to be renewed every five years in order to take into account the fact that plantations reach full production only after a few years.
6. Surveys were to include factors required to establish production potential : age of trees, density of planting and, where necessary, irrigation.
7. The surveys were to show potential production by the more important varieties of fruit, i.e. those representing 3% or more of total area planted.
8. Member States were also to inform the Commission of areas cleared of trees.
9. The surveys were to be extended only to plantations of more than 1500 square metres intended for commercial production.
10. The EAGGF was to contribute to the cost of surveys up to a fixed amount for each country.

Delays in surveys

11. Directive 71/286/EEC stated (in Article 1) that Member States should carry out a survey in 1972 and every five years thereafter.
12. However, certain Member States were unable to carry out the survey in 1972 or submit the results to the Commission before September 1973.

By way of derogation, Directive 74/195/EEC was adopted to allow surveys to be carried out by 30 June 1974, and results transmitted before 1 March 1975<sup>2</sup>.

13. The first survey, therefore, has certain limitations as a comparative study :

- Belgium, for example, provided adjusted figures for 1969/70 from censuses and annual estimates;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ No L 179, 9.8.1971, p. 21

<sup>2</sup> OJ No L 101, 11.4.1974, p. 66.



- other countries had no basis for providing information;
- and the total time span between the results submitted to the Commission by the first and last country was five years.

14. On the other hand, the first survey did represent an important step forward in the amount and quality of information available. For example, previously Germany had no information of the area of plantation, merely the number of trees.

The first survey was extended, in 1974 and 1975, to include Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom, and results for the nine have been published<sup>1</sup>.

15. As a result of the first survey, the Commission are confident that each country will be able to carry out the second survey in 1977 and transmit the results in 1978.

16. It is to be hoped that the Commission's optimism is justified. The Committee on Agriculture urges the Commission to supervise the organisation and carrying out of surveys so as to ensure that deadlines are respected.

#### Simplification of the Directive 71/286/EEC

17. The Commission has introduced into the existing Directive 71/286/EEC, to be replaced by the present proposal, a number of 'minor changes in technical detail'.

18. For example, the requirement to include information on irrigation<sup>2</sup> has been deleted.

Irrigation for all countries, except France and Italy, is negligible.

Within these two countries, certain fruits - such as oranges - are irrigated up to 98% of total area planted.

For the other fruits, the experts have established that there is no correlation between irrigation and yield, younger plantations and varieties or high density classes, since where commercial orchards are not irrigated, natural conditions - water table level, etc. - render it unnecessary.

Reference to irrigation has been deleted, therefore, since its inclusion would serve no useful purpose.

<sup>1</sup> EUROSTAT, Crop Production No 2/1975, Internal Information Bulletin, July 1975

<sup>2</sup> Article 2 D of Directive 71/286/EEC, OJ No L 179, 9.8.1971,

19. The Commission's proposal introduces the possibility of modifying classes of ages and density of plantation. This is to introduce a certain flexibility to take into account practical experience and technical innovation.

The original directive laid down age classes for all fruit trees, the highest class being 25 years and over. Yet orange trees may remain productive for 50 years. Consequently, Italy proposed to further subdivide that class for oranges. Other classifications require breakdowns which better reflect the useful productive age limit of different varieties.

For densities of trees, originally the highest class was set at 1,600 trees or more per hectare, while in Belgium today densities may reach 2,000 - 2,300 per hectare.

Clearly a degree of revision is desirable to make classifications correspond more closely to realities.

20. These modifications are to be adopted by the Commission after consulting the Standing Committee for Agricultural Statistics.

Similarly this procedure is to be adopted for drawing up survey areas and for determining the readable form for electronically processed data.

21. This procedure is perfectly logical, but it is to be hoped that these changes will not lead to any future delays in carrying out surveys.

#### Financing the survey

22. The original amounts up to which Member States could be reimbursed for expenditure on the survey have been revised to take into account inflation and the entry of three states, as follows :

Germany	89,000	(42,000)
France	312,000	(196,000)
Italy	628,000	(420,000)
Netherlands	54,000	(35,000)
Belgium	59,000	(15,000)
Luxembourg	12,000	( 300)
United Kingdom	70,000	
Ireland	6,000	
Denmark	50,000	

Community financing is required in view of the fact that surveys conducted over intervals as long as five years require special arrangements and extraordinary expenditure.

23. An innovation has been introduced in that 31.25% of these amounts may be applied for after the beginning of the survey and the remainder following notification of results.

This has been adopted in order to provide the proper legal basis required in certain Member States for expenditure.

Thus, 400,000 u.a. will be entered on the Budget for 1977 and 880,000 for 1978.

24. These 1,280,000 u.a. will be entered under Article 264 of the Budget 'Statistical Studies and Surveys' rather than under Item 8320 of the Guidance Section of the EAGGF as previously.

#### Utilisation of surveys

25. It is important that surveys, when published, should be employed to improve stability in the fruit sector, and that sufficient cooperation is established between the statistical services of the Commission and national governmental and professional organisations to ensure that producers can make use of forecasts of future production of major varieties to adapt planting, uprooting and grafting plans to likely future market trends.

The Commission has indicated that it has a model capable of forecasting future surpluses of particular varieties. Thus the Commission would be able to indicate to Member States and producer organisations appropriate clearing rates required to achieve stability. The Commission is also in a position to supply yield curves by variety, information not available to certain Member States until the present.

In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has already published a detailed forecast for each variety of apples and pears up to 1980<sup>1</sup>.

This forecast, using the basic EUROSTAT age/yield model, has benefited from comparison of the 1974 orchard survey with previous surveys taken in 1971, and 1966, as well as advice from the Netherlands Agricultural Advisory Services in order to arrive at assumptions about the age groups and the varieties in which clearing is most likely to occur in the next few years.

In the South East and South West of France where the area under Golden Delicious is about one-third of the Community's total, the French pomological experts have made a provisional forecast to 1976 which indicates for this variety an increase in production potential in spite of assumptions of extensive rates of clearing over a three year period (20% in South East and 25% in South West France) .

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<sup>1</sup> 'Het Productiepotentieel van Appel- en Perebomen in 1974 en de Oogstverwachting tot 1980', Statistische Informatie, July 1975

26. Attention should also be paid, in drawing up measures to stabilise the market, to information gained from surveys, and in particular that uprooting premiums are directed at the particular varieties, age classes and areas that will cause future surpluses.

#### Conclusions

27. The 1977 survey will be the first survey to be synchronised for all Member States, and undertaken by Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom according to the provisions of Directive 71/286/EEC.

28. The Commission, in the proposed directive laying down the provisions for a second survey in 1977, has introduced a number of modifications to take into account practical experience and horticultural innovation. These can be approved.

29. Finally, the Committee on Agriculture, stressing the importance of these surveys for bringing a degree of stability to the fruit market, urges the Commission :

- to supervise the organisation and carrying out of surveys so as to ensure deadlines are respected;
- and to ensure that sufficient cooperation is established with national governmental and professional organisations so that producers will make use of forecasts of future production potential of major varieties to allow planting, grafting and uprooting plans to be adapted to likely future market trends.