

Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1251/1999 establishing a support system for producers of certain arable crops, in order to include rice

(2000/C 311 E/26)

COM(2000) 278 final — 2000/0152(CNS)

(Submitted by the Commission on 13 June 2000)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Articles 36 and 37 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions,

Whereas:

(1) The common agricultural policy aims to attain the objectives referred to in Article 33 of the Treaty, taking account of the market situation.

(2) The European rice market is in serious unbalance; the volume of rice stored in public intervention is very large, equivalent to about one fifth of Community output, and increasing significantly each year. The imbalance is caused by increases in both domestic output and imports as well as by the restrictions on exports with refunds in accordance with the general agreement on agriculture.

(3) If the price support system provided for in Council Regulation (EC) No 3072/95 of 22 December 1995 on the common organisation of the market in rice ⁽¹⁾ were maintained, the difficulty of finding outlets for intervention stocks of rice would cause those stocks to increase steadily, with a considerable impact on budget expenditure.

(4) This problem must be solved by revising the common market organisation for rice, in such a way as to take control of output, improve the equilibrium and fluidity of the market and enhance the competitiveness of Community agriculture, while pursuing the other aims of Article 33 of the Treaty, including maintaining suitable income support for producers. This amendment is achieved by means of Regulation (EC) No .../2000.

(5) After careful consideration of all aspects of the situation, it appears that the most suitable solution is to integrate rice into the support arrangements for the producers of certain arable crops, governed by Council Regulation (EC) No 1251/1999 ⁽²⁾, amended by Regulation (EC) No 2704/1999 ⁽³⁾, and by Regulation (EC) No .../2000 to include fibre flax and hemp, while discontinuing the intervention price arrangements.

(6) As rice has a different yield from other cereals, the Member States should be given the possibility of using a specific yield for rice.

(7) In some Member States, the effect of including rice in the support scheme for certain arable crop producers is to change average yields; consequently, the data on average yields in the Regulation should be adapted.

(8) In view of the discontinuation of intervention prices, the single base amount defined for all arable crops should be applied to rice from the first marketing year.

(9) The measures required for the implementation hereof will be adopted under Council Decision 1999/468/EC of 28 June 1999 laying down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission ⁽⁴⁾,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Regulation (EC) No 1251/1999 is amended as follows:

1. The second subparagraph of Article 3(3) is replaced by the following:

‘The irrigated base area shall be equal to the average area irrigated from 1989 to 1991 with a view to harvesting arable crops including the increases made pursuant to Article 3(1), fourth subparagraph, last sentence of Regulation (EEC) No 1765/92. Areas to take into consideration for rice in the framework of this separate area shall be those provided for in Article 6(4) of Regulation (EC) No 3072/95.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 160, 26.6.1999, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 327, 21.12.1999, p. 12.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ L 184, 17.7.1999, p. 23.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 329, 30.12.1995, p. 18.

The irrigated base area in Portugal shall be progressively increased by 60 000 hectares, for those areas where it has been established that investment in irrigation began after 1 August 1992. This increase may be added partially or totally to the irrigated maize base area as referred to in Article 3(2).'

2. In Article 3, the following paragraph 3a is added:

'3a In their regionalisation plans, Member States may apply a specific yield figure for rice, for each production region concerned. These specific yields shall be set at such a level that their weighted average amounts to 6,04 for Italy, 6,35 for Spain, 7,48 for Greece, 6,05 for Portugal and 5,86 for France. In this case, a base area as referred to in Article 2(2) must be established separately for rice.'

3. In Article 3(6) the following subparagraph is added:

'Any revision of the regionalisation plans to incorporate data concerning rice shall be presented by the Member States to the Commission at the latest on 1 August 2000.'

4. The first subparagraph of Article 3(7) is replaced by the following:

'Should a Member State, pursuant to paragraph 1, choose to establish production regions the demarcation of which does not correspond to that of regional base areas, it shall send the Commission a summary statement of payment applications and the yields pertaining to these. If it emerges from this information that, in a Member State, the average yield resulting from the regionalisation plan applied in 1993 or, in the case of Austria, Finland and Sweden, the average yield resulting from the plan applied in 1995 or, in the case of Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal and France, the yield fixed respectively at 4,00 tonnes per hectare, 2,95 tonnes per hectare, 3,48 tonnes per hectare, 3,00 tonnes per hectare and 6,02 tonnes per hectare, is exceeded, all payments to be made in that Member State for the following marketing year shall be reduced in proportion to the overrun which has been recorded. However, this provision shall not apply where the quantity for which applications were made, expressed in tonnes of cereals, does not exceed that resulting from the product of the total base areas of the Member State by the aforementioned average yield.'

5. In Article 4, paragraph 2 is replaced by the following:

'2. The calculation mentioned in paragraph 1 shall be made using the average cereals yield for all arable crops. Where a Member State chooses to apply a specific yield as provided for in Article 3(3a), that yield shall be used for rice, and the average cereals yield shall be used for arable crops other than rice.'

Where maize is treated separately, the "maize" yield shall be used for maize, and the "cereals other than maize" yield shall be used for cereals, oilseeds, rice, linseed and flax and hemp grown for fibre.'

6. The following words are added to the first subparagraph of Article 4(3):

'for rice:

— EUR 63,00/t from the 2001/02 marketing year onwards.'

7. In Article 6(2) the following subparagraph is added:

'By 31 December 2003, the producer Member States shall send the Commission a report on the environmental situation of rice production with special reference to the development in traditional zones and the effect of any national measures taken to safeguard the environmental interest of rice-growing areas set aside.'

8. Article 9 is amended as follows:

(a) the introductory sentence is replaced by the following:

'Detailed rules for the application of this Chapter shall be adopted in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 9a(2), and in particular:'

(b) in the first subparagraph, the following indent is inserted after the fifth indent:

— those relating to rice, and where applicable to the fixing of the specific base area taking account of the areas provided for in Article 6(4) of Regulation (EC) No 3072/95;

(c) in the first indent of the second subparagraph, point (ii) is replaced by the following:

'(ii) certified seed in the case of durum wheat, rice and flax and hemp grown for fibre.'

9. The following Article 9a is inserted:

'Article 9a

1. The Commission shall be assisted by the Management Committee for Cereals set up under Article 23 of Regulation (EEC) No 1766/92.

2. Where reference is made to this paragraph, Articles 4 and 7 of Decision 1999/468/EC shall apply, in compliance with Article 8 thereof.

3. The period referred to in Article 4(3) of Decision 1999/468/EC shall be set at one month.'

10. In the last subparagraph of Article 10(3) and in Article 12, references to Article 23 of Regulation (EEC) No 1766/92 are replaced by references to Article 9a(2).

11. In Annex I, the following point VI is added:

Article 2

CN code	Description
VI. RICE	
1006 10	Rice

This Regulation shall enter into force on the seventh day following its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

It shall apply from the 2001/02 marketing year.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.
