



LMC Brussels Update – May 2014

**CAP** – A new series of [factsheets](#) published by the Commission shows that UK is the 5th largest recipient of direct payments (after France, Germany, Spain and Italy). In 2012, the UK received over EUR 3 297 million on direct payments, benefitting some 178 900 beneficiaries. The injection of EU public resources remains crucial for British farming, with CAP subsidies accounting for 43% of agricultural income in 2013, to the extent that farmers' income has caught up with wages and salaries in other sectors of the economy. With around EUR 22.5 billion, the budget available for direct payments in the UK under the new CAP will remain stable despite a reduction of 3.2% at EU level.

**Animal Health** - Following last month Parliament 1<sup>st</sup> reading agreement, the Council has adopted a regulation on Animal Health. This regulation finances in particular the veterinary eradication programmes. EU funding to support these measures gives priority to diseases of public health importance and with major economic impacts for trade and farmers. The text covers expenditure for official controls with a view to improving the effectiveness of controls performed by the Member States and the enforcement of the agrifood chain *acquis* in general. It also provides for the financing of the Better Training for Safer Food programme for training Member State and candidate country national authority staff involved in official controls as well as the network of the EU Reference Laboratories which ensure the uniformity and reliability of the methods of analysis or tests.

**Schmallenberg virus (SBV)** - EFSA has published a [report providing a review of the current knowledge on SBV](#). It shows that there is no scientific evidence of transmission through insemination and that vector transmission remains the principal route explaining the dissemination of such viruses. SBV has successfully overwintered, despite lengthy period of minimal vector activity. Unfortunately, the application of movement restrictions, even a total animal movement ban, seems to have little effect on SBV spread. EFSA recommends further research to understand overwintering mechanisms and assess risk from trade in live animals. Measurement of the duration of immunity in both naturally infected and vaccinated animals are also needed to inform future vaccination strategies.

**Porcine Epidemic Diarrhoea (PED)** - Following OIE notification of PED in the US, Member States' experts endorsed safeguard measures as regards the animal health requirements for the introduction into the EU of spray dried blood and blood plasma of porcine origin intended for the production of feed for farmed porcine animals. As inappropriate heat treatment or contamination after heat treatment may lead to the spread of the virus with such products, it was decided that those products could only be imported after a treatment at 80 degrees that would inactivate any Coronavirus present in the product, followed by subsequent storage for six weeks at room temperature, that would inactivate any virus that may have contaminated the product after treatment. The Commission intends to review the situation at the SCOFAH meeting in early June.

**Pig welfare** – An [EFSA opinion](#) confirms the need for pigs to have manipulable materials to satisfy a range of behavioural needs and thus avoid adverse welfare consequences, one of these being an increased risk for tail-biting in weaners and rearing pigs. The type of manipulable material supplied has an effect on the prevalence of severe skin lesions. It also affects prevalence of bitten tails but this measure may be less sensitive if tails are docked. Based on the current state of knowledge, EFSA proposes two simple tool-boxes for on farm use to assess the functionality of the supplied manipulable material and the presence and strength of risk factors for tail biting. Both proposed tool-boxes include a combination of the most important resource-based and animal-based measures.

**FAO Food Outlook** – According to [FAO's estimates](#), world meat production is anticipated to grow modestly in 2014 to 311.8 million tonnes, an increase of 3.3 million tonnes, or 1.1 percent, compared with 2013. Growth is anticipated to be concentrated in the developing countries, which are also the

main centres of rising demand. At the same time, global meat trade is forecast to increase by 1.4 percent to reach 31.3 million tonnes in 2014 – or 10 percent of production. However, there are marked differences in projected trade for the different varieties of meat, with growth forecast for bovine and poultry meat and a decline for ovine and pigmeat. Poultry remains the main product traded, representing 43% of the total, followed by bovine, pig and ovine meat, respectively.

**Nutrition in 2050** - The Commission has published the results of [an analysis aiming at providing insight and guidance for future food policy development](#). The report insists on the need for policy measures to induce behavioural change at all levels of the food chain, from primary production on to consumption. It also highlights the need to promote diversity in the food system so as to increase resilience to future shocks or disruptions. Slightly worrying is the report's general assumption that future EU food policy will necessarily encourage plant-based nutrition as a way to deliver both greater levels of nutrition and a reduction in environmental footprint and therefore include measures to reduce meat consumption.

**Food sustainability** – Ahead of the publication of the long awaited Commission's communication on food sustainability, representatives from the EU food chain (inc. Copa-Cogeca, FoodDrinkEurope, WWF etc) have released a [joint Declaration entitled 'Actions towards a more sustainable European food chain'](#). The declaration provides a definition of food sustainability which encompasses the three pillars of sustainability (social, economic and environmental dimensions) all of which need to be simultaneously addressed if the sustainability of food systems is to be ensured. At the same time, Agriculture Ministers discussed food waste in the EU and ways to reduce its scope. To tackle this issue, the Commission was ready to consider the idea to extend the list of products which could be exempted from the requirement to provide a "best before" date on the label.

**Animal feed** - EFSA has published [a scientific opinion on the potential reduction of the currently authorised maximum zinc content in animal feed](#). The newly proposed total maximum zinc contents are 150 mg Zn/kg complete feed for piglets and sows and 100 mg Zn/kg complete feed for all other species and categories (inc. cattle, dairy cows, sheep and goat, and pigs for fattening). The use of phytase in feeding piglets, pigs for fattening and sows would allow a further reduction of the newly proposed total maximum contents by 30 % (from 150 to 100 mg Zn/kg feed for pigs for fattening). EFSA expects the new proposed levels to reduce the amount of zinc in manure released in the environment by about 20 %.

**Water** – [A report published by the European Court of Auditors](#) highlights that there is insufficient knowledge, at the EU level and in Member States, about the pressures placed on water by agricultural activities and how those pressures are evolving. In addition, delays in the implementation of the Water Framework Directive have hindered the integration of water policy objectives into the CAP. The Court recommends the Commission to tackle the delays in implementation of the Water Framework Directive and to make sure it has information that is capable of measuring the evolution of the pressures placed on water by agricultural practices.