

CIAA Flash

Publication addressed to CIAA members

Highlight

CIAA publishes 2 reports - Memorandum to the German EU Presidency and Data & Trends 2006 - Outlining the priorities for Europe's food and drink industry in 2007 and beyond, CIAA recently published its updated bi-annual Memorandum, this time addressed to the new German Presidency of the EU. CIAA has also just published its 2006 Data & Trends report. Contained in the report are the key data and trend figures for the EU food and drink industry over the period 2002-2006. Both reports can be downloaded from the brochure section of CIAA's website. http://www.ciaa.eu/pages_en/documents/brochures_list.asp

BEST WISHES FOR THE YEAR HEALTH HAPPINESS AND PROSPERITY FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY!!!!

Toxicological Safety

Standing Committee (Toxicological Safety) Tackles Sizeable Agenda at Final Meeting of 2006

The Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (Toxicological Safety of the Food Chain section) faced a hefty agenda at its end-of-year meeting on 14/12. Subjects tabled for discussion included contaminants, dyes and food contact materials, namely a draft proposal which would amend (for the fourth time) the Plastics Directive 2002/72/EC, and, as a parallel measure, a proposal for a time-limited Regulation which would set limits for plasticizers in gaskets during the transitional period from the adoption of the 4th amendment until its transposition into national law. There was agreement that both Regulations must enter into force simultaneously. The subject of contaminants dominated much of the discussion, however, resulting in a unanimous vote in favour of a draft Commission Regulation laying down sampling and analysis methods for the official control of levels of lead, cadmium, mercury, inorganic tin, 3-MCPD and benzo(a)pyrene in foodstuffs, and the endorsement of two draft Commission Recommendations: one on the monitoring of the presence of furan, and the second on the monitoring of acrylamide levels.

Contaminants

CIAA Questions Premature Establishment of Maximum Limits

On 22/12 December, three contaminants-related Commission Regulations were published in the Official Journal of the EU: Regulation 1881/2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs (consolidating Regulation 466/2001 and its 18 amendments), Regulation 1882/2006 laying down methods of sampling and analysis for the official control of levels of nitrates in certain foodstuffs, and Regulation 1883/2006 establishing methods of sampling and analysis for the official control of levels

of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in certain foodstuffs. Regulation 1881/2006 includes maximum levels for Deoxynivalenol in unprocessed maize and Zearelenone in unprocessed maize, maize intended for human consumption, maize flour, maize meal, maize grits, maize germ, refined maize oil, maize snacks, maize-based breakfast cereals, and processed maize-based foods for infants and young children. These maximum levels will apply from July 2007.

However, previous drafts of the Regulation provided by the Commission had in fact indicated that these limits were still under discussion and had yet to be finalised. Indeed, the draft levels had been due to be discussed with stakeholders at the Commission's Fourth Fusarium Toxin Forum on 15-16/01. Following this unexpected development, CIAA contacted the Commission to express its concern that the Forum would have to focus on amending the levels contained within the published Regulation. In response, the Commission conceded that stakeholders could still propose changes to the current provisions based on facts, supported by data.

Dietary Food Additive Intake

DG SANCO Hosts Meeting on Dietary Food Additive Intake

On 15/12, DG SANCO invited stakeholders to a meeting to discuss dietary food additive intake in the EU. A total of 15 presentations were delivered by various stakeholders, on topics ranging from portraits of national intake levels to studies of specific additives. CIAA also contributed to the debate in the form of a general presentation on data availability. In conclusion, the Commission decided to produce a summary of the main issues raised, and circulate a call for membership of a new working group on additive intakes. CIAA has already expressed interest in joining this group.

Energy

Energy and Climate Policy

The Commission today put forward a comprehensive set of measures to establish a new Energy Policy for Europe to combat climate change and to boost the EU's energy security and competitiveness. The package sets a series of ambitious targets on greenhouse gas emissions and renewable energy and aims to create a true internal market for energy.

The Commission proposes that if an international post-2012 agreement on climate change is reached this should lead to a 30% cut in emissions from developed countries by 2020. Without such agreement, the Commission proposes that the EU commits unilaterally to a reduction target of at least 20% by 2020. This twin-track strategy of a lower unilateral and higher conditional target reflects a political approach advocated by industry Commissioner Verheugen aimed at continued EU political leadership on climate change without moving too far ahead of other industrialised countries.

As regards the necessary shift to low carbon energy, the Commission proposes that a binding target of 20% of EU overall energy mix will be sourced from renewable energy by 2020. This will require a massive growth in all three renewable energy sectors: electricity, biofuels and heating and cooling. This renewable target will be supplemented by a minimum target for biofuels of 10%. The proposal allows each Member State the freedom to determine the best renewable energy mix for its own circumstances. Member States will be required to establish National Action Plans. On energy efficiency, the Commission reiterates the objective of saving 20% of total primary energy consumption by 2020.

The Commission will seek endorsement of the energy and climate change proposals during the Spring European Council on 8/9 March and will come forward with legislation in light of these discussions.

Trade

Russia/EU agree on trade of animal products - EU Commissioner Kyprianou met Gordejew, Russian Minister of Agriculture, on 12/2006 in Moscow to find a solution to the Russian export ban of animal products originating in the EU as from 01/2007. The meeting focused on the accession of Romania and Bulgaria and the implications for all EU countries, the specific problem with Poland was not raised. A verbal agreement was reached that allows continued exports. The agreement will be written into a Memorandum of Understanding, which both parties are expected to sign on 18 January, during the "Green Week" in Berlin.

EU/US advance WTO DDA talks - Commission President Barroso met US President Bush on 09/01 in Washington to find ways out of the deadlocked WTO DDA talks. Although no details were discussed, new political impetus has been given based somewhere on a 51.5% average cut of EU farm tariffs and a reduction of US domestic support from \$23 to \$15 billion. Barroso felt optimistic about concluding the DDA multilateral trade round and said the meeting was "constructive and that new instructions to negotiators has been given to come up with solutions as soon as possible". As a next stage, an agricultural compromise is to be found at the level of G6 (including Brazil, India, Australia and Japan), and Commissioner Mandelson and US counterpart Schwab declared their ambition to break the deadlock before the Davos Forum on 24-28 January.

Confederation of the Food and Drink Industries of the EU
Avenue des Arts, 43 - B-1040 Brussels

Publication: S. Naccachian. Tel: +32 2 514 11 11 - Fax: +32 2 511 29 05 - E-mail : ciaa@ciaa.be