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Agricultural Situation

EU Agriculture Commissioner-Designate sets out her views on the CAP

2004

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Report Highlights:

The European Commissioner-Designate for Agriculture, Mariann Fischer Boel, has set out her views on the CAP. This is her formal response to questionnaires from the European Parliament that all the incoming Commissioners must complete prior to hearings between these two groups, part of the process for investing the new College of Commissioners. Fischer Boel placed the reform of the sugar sector as her highest priority, followed by reform of the fruit and vegetables regime. Wine policy may also be reformed. She also stressed the key importance of rural development.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Brussels USEU [BE2]
[E3]

The new Commissioners will present themselves to the European Parliament (EP) over the coming couple of weeks. This is part of the process of investing a new College of Commissioners on November 1, 2004. The European Parliament has the right to ask detailed questions of each Commissioner. The European Parliament must formally approve the team of Commissioners as a whole – it cannot reject individual Commissioners. They have already voted to approve the nomination of the new Commission President, Manuel Barroso.

Marian Fisher Boel's hearing with the European Parliament's Agriculture Committee is set for either September 29 or October 6. Markos Kyprianou, the incoming Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection's hearing, in front of the EP's Committee for the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, will take place on October 8.

To prepare for these meetings, each Commissioner designate has completed two questionnaires – one general, the other on their policy area. They give some insight into the approach each new Commissioner will take during their five year term of office. These are available [on line](#):

http://www.europarl.eu.int/hearings/commission/2004_comm/questionnaires_en.htm

Fisher Boel has put reform of the sugar regime as her number one priority, followed closely by the 'simplification' of fruit and vegetables policy and a review of EU wine policy. She also emphasizes the importance of rural development policy to the future of the CAP. She highlighted enlargement (Bulgaria and Romania are scheduled to join the EU in 2007) and the Doha Development Round as other key policy areas.

On biotech, her answers follow the Commission line, although she is rumored by the Brussels press to be 'less than enthusiastic' on this. She also stressed the importance of co-existence.

Markos Kyprianou is the incoming Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, replacing David Byrne. Among issues he prioritized in his answers were the importance of a rapid rollout of the measures set out in the new Official Food and Feed Controls legislation. He stated that this should lead to improved food safety, with Member States developing further their control plans and audit systems, as well as the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) needing to make less routine inspections enabling them to focus on areas of their work which have not as of yet received sufficient attention. Kyprianou also stated that he would like to see the EU's Rapid Alert System for food and feed expanding to include non-EU countries.

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