

April - May 2013

FRESHFEL PRESENTS FRUIT/VEG EXPORT BARRIERS TO MARKET ACCESS WG

Non-tariff barriers in third countries often weigh heavier on EU fresh produce exports than tariffs. Because of high SPS requirements, exports to some destinations are almost zero even though mutual trade is governed by a free trade agreement. On the contrary, exports from the same destinations can access the EU market without problems. On 11 April, Freshfel gave a presentation about the barriers for EU F&V exports to the Market Access Working Group in DG Trade. The presentation named tedious bilateral negotiations of SPS protocols, the excessive number of pests listed by some countries, and impractical requirements for product treatment as some of the biggest hurdles for EU fruit and vegetable exports. As a conclusion, more reciprocity is needed in market access and unnecessary levels of SPS protection should be abolished.

NEW FACE AT THE FRESHFEL SECRETARIAT

After four years with Freshfel, Sebastian Kruse has left the Freshfel secretariat and accepted a new professional challenge. He has been replaced by André Feldhof who will be responsible for communication and trade policy. André Feldhof joins the secretariat after studies in Maastricht and Brussels (in European Studies and International Political Economy) and previous work experience at the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA). A German national, André also speaks English, French, Dutch, Italian and Chinese.



André Feldhof has joined the Freshfel Secretariat as a Communication and Trade Policy Advisor.

Register now:

<http://www.freshcongress.com/>

FRESH 2013 - FRESHFEL AGM - PARIS - 12-14 JUNE



FRESH, jointly organised by Freshfel Europe and industry magazine Eurofruit, will take place on 12-14 June in Paris. The leading conference and networking event for the fresh produce business in Europe will mark its tenth anniversary this June with a return to the location of its inaugural congress back in 2003. FRESH will present the business with new ideas and potential new strategies to combat the recent stagnation in fresh fruit and vegetable sales and consumption across the whole of Europe. Focusing on nutrition and consumer health, a full programme of expert speakers and panelists will offer their insight into how innovation and investment can improve the health of the sector and the customers and consumers it serves. Registration is open and the latest information can be found at <http://www.freshcongress.com>. Freshfel's AGM will take place back to back with FRESH.

FRESHFEL PRESIDENT PHILIPPE HENRI MEETS FRENCH MEPs OVER SUSTAINABILITY

Freshfel President Philippe Henri, along with representatives from AREFLH and Carrefour, met with a group of French MEPs from the EPP group in Strasbourg on 16 April. The meeting was convened by MEP Marie-Thérèse SANCHEZ-SCHMID and touched on societal issues relevant for the fruit and vegetable sector such as wastage, local supply chains, external trade issues and other aspects of sustainability. Philippe Henri presented the situation for Freshfel members on the ground and pointed to current initiatives of the sector.



FRESHFEL PARTICIPATES IN COPA COGECA WORKSHOP ON NEW EU FOOD LEGISLATION

At the beginning of May, Freshfel participated in a workshop organised by Copa Cogeca and the Irish EU presidency that dealt with the new EU food legislation package. Under the title “The new package for a Safer Food Chain: What is at stake?”, the workshop focused on the changes introduced by the legislation for the food industry. Freshfel’s Frederic Rosseneu gave a presentation explaining the changes that the regulation brings in the areas of plant health and official controls.



FRESHFEL GIVES PRESENTATION TO EFSA STRAWBERRY MEETING

Freshfel was asked by EFSA to give a presentation about the current state of strawberry and raspberry trade, worldwide and in the EU. Experts from Spain, France, Belgium and Italy also gave their input. Based on the contributions, EFSA will produce an opinion on the need to reevaluate phytosanitary risks for strawberries and raspberries.



FRESHFEL ATTENDS GLOBAL GAP AGM

In April, Freshfel participated in the Global GAP AGM in Argentina. During the conference, General Delegate Philippe Binard gave a presentation on the use of active substances according to EU regulation.

FRESHFEL BOARD FOCUSES ON COMPETITIVENESS

The Freshfel board came together on 7 May in Brussels and talked about the latest developments for the fruit and vegetable sector. Discussions mainly centred around competitiveness. The chair recalled the outcome of the discussion at the previous Board while the General Delegate summed up the progress and views as reported from the various Freshfel divisions with perspectives from production down to retail.



FRESHFEL PROMOTION WORKING GROUP CONDUCTS SWOT ANALYSIS

The Freshfel Promotion Working Group met in May and conducted a SWOT analysis of the fresh produce sector with a view to improve fruit and vegetable promotion. Participants debated the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for fresh produce and compared its promotion with promotion activities in other agricultural sectors. Participants recognised the importance of marketing for the fresh produce sector and agreed that many ways could be found to increase and improve promotion activities for fruits and vegetables.



COMMISSION CONSULTATIONS

Over the last two months, Freshfel participated in several consultations launched by the European Commission:

- **SCHOOL FRUIT SCHEME:** Freshfel believes that the taking into account the main objective of the SFS - to increase fruit and vegetable consumption among children in a context of stagnating consumption across Europe and the epidemic rise of obesity - further extending the scope of the products covered by the scheme will dilute its efficiency and make it more difficult to measure the results. Therefore, Freshfel responded to the consultation in favour of a status quo of the situation, which will keep the schemes separate as it is the case at the present.
- **ORGANIC AGRICULTURE:** Freshfel is of the opinion that harmonised rules and their enforcement would give added benefits to both supply chain and consumers. The success of the organic sector is highly dependent on consumer confidence, and a strong regime safeguarding quality is desirable to maintain this confidence. Freshfel does not see a role for the Commission to promote organic produce more than conventional or IPM produce and prefers that the choice be left to the consumer.
- **FREE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE US:** Freshfel considers that a trade agreement with the US will only produce benefits if it clears SPS barriers for imports and exports between the US and EU. Current EU exports to the US are subject to SPS protocols which are negotiated per crop and per EU country. Freshfel also believes that a lifting of pre-clearance requirements (by which the approval of an American health inspector is necessary before goods can be shipped) must be a priority during the FTA negotiations.
- **FREE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THAILAND:** Freshfel believes that mutual recognition of food safety inspections would greatly help Thai and EU exporters to react to demand in each other's markets. An easing of SPS requirements in Thailand would make access to the Thai market easier without endangering local produce, which is largely complimentary to EU fresh produce.

A FEW TIPS HOW TO STORE SELECTED FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Refrigerate us in the fruit compartment



Put us in the fridge in bags, too much air dehydrates us



Keep us vegetables away from the fruit, they make us ripen too fast



The fridge hurts us two. Keep us cool, but not in the fridge



It is time to ENJOY FRESH!

Find more info about fruit and vegetables on www.enjoyfresh.eu

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YouTube

<http://www.youtube.com/user/freshfelchannel>



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