



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Crisis preparedness in food, animals and plants
Unit G.4 Official controls

Minutes
Working Group
"Official Controls Regulation (EU 2017/625)"

Tuesday 22 November 2022, **9H30 – 12H30**
(Skype for Business call)

WORKING GROUP

1 **9:30 – 11:00** **Article 47:** Implementation of import controls on organics, including fees for border checks

The Commission informed on the ongoing data collection in TRACES to monitor the implementation rate of the COI-CHED link per Member State. It informed that final results will be presented in the next meeting of the OCR Working Group, in early 2023. The Commission also clarified the implementation of the COI-CHED link, including guidance in case the responsible for the consignment indicated in the COI is not the same person as the one indicated in the CHED. The Commission will consider whether to introduce changes to make box 19 of the COI mandatory in TRACES in case a BCP is selected in box 10 of the COI. The Commission further clarified that under current rules it is not required to select box 23 of the COI (special customs procedures) and to perform a first and second verification before the endorsement of the COI in case a consignment is placed under customs warehousing for storage only. The Commission is assessing a possible change of the current rules and will keep the Member States informed.

In a second part of the discussion, the

			Commission presented a Non-Paper on fees for organic border checks. Three Member States indicated that they interpret Article 79(5) of the OCR in the sense that fees for such checks are <i>not</i> mandatory, together with their arguments. By contrast, two Member States expressed concerns over disharmonization if such fees were not mandatory. The Commission informed that the Non -Paper would also be discussed in the meeting of the Committee on Organic Production on 25/11/22 and asked Member States to send their position in writing before the winter break in view of a final assessment.
2	11:00–11:45	Guidance on several provisions of the OCR – update and exchange of views on new elements	The Commission presented for discussion new elements for the OCR guidance note on the following topics: - derogations from mandatory accreditation for official laboratories; - use of commercial storage facilities by border control posts; - e-commerce controls; - audits vs. inspections; - the official veterinarian and auxiliary. Furthermore, the Commission expressed its views in relation to questions raised by Member States in the following areas: - second expert opinion; - accreditation of DNA sequencing methods; - official certification issues; - handling of non compliant consignments entering the Union; - accreditation issues of delegated bodies under OCR.
3	11:45–12:00	Article 37: update on EU survey	The Commission illustrated the current list of designated official laboratories based on information entered by Member States in the database

			implemented by the Commission on the EU Survey platform, and provided answers to frequently asked questions regarding the use of the platform.
4	12:00-12:30	Updates on ongoing work on implementation of the OCR	The Commission informed Member States' representatives that work on the draft implementing act under Article 70 OCR would not be pursued, due to a lack of legal base for the proposed content. Reflections will continue how a more harmonised application of Articles 66 and 67 can be promoted by means other than legislation.

(The working group meeting continued at 14H30 with a separate point on digitalisation, for which a separate invitation had been sent to Member States).