

July 2003

E



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

Organisation
des
Nations
Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE

Thirty-third Session

Rome, 1-2 March 2004

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable: *for decision* (ECA:33/04/1; ECA:33/04/INF.1)
3. Appointment of Rapporteur: *for decision*
4. Food Safety and Quality in Europe : Aspects concerning in particular quality, nutritional balance, the importance of agricultural land and cultural heritage ("terroirs"): *for discussion* (ECA:33/04/2)

Improving the safety and quality of food products remains an important policy target of governments, private sector and societal organizations throughout the European region. These improvements are necessary to strengthen food safety, public health and welfare, to enhance consumer confidence, to answer their requests, to improve the local economy and to support participation in international food trade. The 23rd Regional Conference for Europe endorsed the recommendations of the Pan-European Conference on Food Safety and Quality and advised all stakeholders involved to take appropriate action for upgrading food production and control systems.

Whereas food safety refers to all those hazards which may make food injurious to the health of the consumer, quality includes all other attributes that influence a product's value to the consumer. Quality is complimentary to food safety and a dialogue must exist based upon these two concepts. Quality refers to positive attributes such as sensory characteristics, nutritional balance and conditions of production, through regional and local elements of specificity. Sensory characteristics do effectively impact on consumer preferences and choices, and are also determining elements of diet diversity.

Diet diversity impacts in turn on nutritional balance, whereas nutritional value has obvious implications on public health. The conditions of production, appropriately controlled, may benefit the overall characteristics of a food product, while enhancing the potential for valorisation of local or regional production know-how. This also enables a regional cultural

For reasons of economy, this document is produced in a limited number of copies. Delegates and observers are kindly requested to bring it to the meetings and to refrain from asking for additional copies, unless strictly indispensable.
Most FAO meeting documents are available on Internet at www.fao.org

promotion taking into account the physical and ecological as well as social and economical local characteristics. On the one hand, these elements are decisive factors in consumers' decision making and choice. On the other hand, consumers should be in a position to influence production processes and to orientate public policies. In addition, the control of all these factors may contribute to product tracing and furthermore bear upon food safety characteristics and to the provision of appropriate assurance of such.

Member countries may consider how a common understanding in food quality improvement should be formulated and what indicators and instruments could be identified for appropriate action. In this regard the scientific basis for food quality evaluations needs to be addressed, whereas a better understanding of economic impacts of quality issues, and of their implications on agro-food practices through the development and use of good manufacturing practices, regional planning and consumer information should be sought. The Commission will provide Member countries the opportunity to jointly identify specific concerns and formulate practical solutions for further improvements.

5. Review of the Activities of the European System Cooperative Research Networks in Agriculture (ESCORENA) : Progress Report on Assessment undertaken in 2003 (Appendix 3 of document ECA: 32/02/4-Rev.1 refers): *for discussion and decision* (ECA:33/04/3)
6. Report on Activities of the ECA Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development: *for discussion and/or information* (ECA:33/04/4)
7. Election of Chairperson and Members of the ECA Executive Committee for a term of office of two years (2004-2005): *for decision*
8. Other Business
9. Date and Place of the Thirty-fourth Session
10. Adoption of the Report
11. Closing of the Session