INTERNATIONAL MEAT CONSULTATIVE GROUP - SEVENTH MEETING

Note by Chairman

Introduction

1. The International Meat Consultative Group held its seventh meeting on 28 and 29 March 1977. The following countries or groups of countries were represented (a list of participants was circulated in document IMCG/INF/5 and Corr.1):

Argentina
Australia
Austria
Brazil
Canada
Colombia
Egypt
European Communities

Finland
Gabon
Hungary
Japan
Madagascar
Malta
Mexico
New Zealand

Romania
South Africa
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
United States
Uruguay
Yugoslavia

(and their member States)

Poland

In addition, representatives of the ECE, the FAO, the OECD and UNCTAD attended the meeting as observers.

Agenda

2. The Group adopted as the basis for its discussions the topics outlined in the airgramme convening the meeting (GATT/AIR/1353) with the addition of an item for other business.

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6 April 1977
Special Distribution
3. Proposal concerning background notes by the secretariat

The Group had before it in document IMCG/W/34 the text of the revised proposal referred to in paragraph 8 of the Note by the Chairman on the sixth meeting of the Group, and which had been circulated to all participants for their consideration and with a view to reaching a decision on the matter. In this regard it was noted that what was proposed was not a comprehensive analysis with a view to making global forecasts of supply and demand. It was accordingly agreed that in order to facilitate the Group's work the secretariat prepare for each meeting of the Group a short background discussion paper on current market conditions and probable developments in international trade in beef and bovine animals. The discussion paper would be circulated in advance of each meeting and would be based on information and views as may be submitted by participants for this purpose, and on such other information as may be available to the secretariat, including data and other information available from the ECE, the FAO, the OECD and UNCTAD. The discussion paper would be prepared by the secretariat on its own responsibility subject to such guidance as the Group may provide from time to time.

4. Consultations

In accordance with the modified procedures adopted at its previous meeting (IMCG/6, paragraph 4) the Group consulted on current market conditions and foreseeable trends in international trade in bovine meat and live cattle. In this regard the Group had before it an up-dated secretariat summary relating to the main aggregates of production and trade (document IMCG/W/15/Rev.3), an up-dated table of prices practised in international trade (document IMCG/W/23/Rev.2), and the replies of participants to the model questionnaire.

5. It was not considered necessary for the Group at this stage in the development of its consultative process to attempt to draw conclusions. Consistent with the early-warning function of the Group it was sufficient that the impressions gained from the consultations should be taken into account by participants in their further decision-making in capitals and in their preparations for the next meeting of the Group.

6. To facilitate reflection by participants on the matters raised and the views expressed in the consultations it was agreed that statements made by participants would, if they so wished, be reproduced and circulated by the secretariat. The following statements are being circulated:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Document</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>IMCG/W/35</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>IMCG/W/36</td>
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<tr>
<td>European Communities</td>
<td>IMCG/W/37</td>
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<td>Canada</td>
<td>IMCG/W/38</td>
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<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>IMCG/W/39</td>
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The collection of data required to enable the Group to carry out its functions

(a) The model questionnaire

7. Up-dated replies to the model questionnaire were received from the following participants either prior to or at the meeting: Argentina, Australia, Canada, Japan, Malta, New Zealand, Switzerland and the United States. Since the last meeting of the Group a new reply to the model questionnaire was received from Yugoslavia bringing the total number of countries supplying information in response to the questionnaire to eighteen plus the European Communities (19 replies).

8. It was agreed that participants should continue to employ their best endeavours to submit replies to the model questionnaire, together with replies relating to the most recent quarter for which data or estimates are available, sufficiently in advance of meetings of the Group in order that there can be an informed and meaningful discussion of the current market situation and foreseeable trends based on prior analysis of the information. It was also agreed that the secretariat would again prepare and issue a summary relating to the main aggregates of production and trade.

9. For the purposes of the next meeting participants are invited to submit up-dated replies to the secretariat before 27 June 1977.

10. It was also agreed that at its next meeting the Group would embark on a detailed examination of the form and content of the model questionnaire (L/4168/Rev.1) with a view to further refining the questionnaire. To facilitate this task it is suggested that those participants who wish to do so could communicate to the secretariat in advance of the next meeting their views on specific points.

(b) Prices practised in international trade

11. The Group took note of the monthly data on prices supplied by a number of participants and reproduced in document IMCG/W/23/Rev.2, including the data supplied by Australia with respect to transactions in markets other than the principal markets. The Group was advised that information had also been received from the European Communities on the evolution from 1973 to 1977 of the amount of export restitutions in respect of live animals and frozen meat, and that this would be circulated to all participants in due course. It was agreed that document IMCG/W/23 should be up-dated for the next meeting of the Group on the basis of additional information to be supplied by the participants concerned, viz., Argentina, Australia, the European Communities, New Zealand and Uruguay.

Other business

Date of next meeting

12. Subject to confirmation, the Consultative Group will hold its next meeting on 7 and 8 July 1977.