

PROPOSED REPLACEMENT EU ACT INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

DSC REF: DSC/01a/2024

Proposal for a DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Council Decision 2003/17/EC as regards the equivalence of field inspections carried out in the Republic of Moldova on fodder plant seed-producing crops and on the equivalence of fodder plant seed produced in the Republic of Moldova, and as regards the equivalence of field inspections carried out in Ukraine on beet seed-producing crops and oil plant seed-producing crops and on the equivalence of beet seed and oil plant seed produced in Ukraine

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Proposed Replacement EU Act

The proposed EU Act aims to amend 2003/17/EC: Council Decision of 16 December 2002 on the equivalence of field inspections carried out in third countries on seed-producing crops and on the equivalence of seed produced in third countries.

Summary of the Act

The proposed amendment aims to grant equivalence to the Republic of Moldova in respect of fodder seed, having previously been granted equivalence for cereal seed, vegetable seed and seed of oil and fibre plants since 2018.

It also aims to grant equivalence to Ukraine in respect of seed of beet, sunflower and swede rape, having previously been granted equivalence in cereal seed since 2020.

Both applicant countries have been admitted to the relevant Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Seed Schemes for the Varietal Certification of Seed moving in International Trade and have seed laboratories accredited by the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA).

The legislation and systems in place in both countries have been found to be equivalent and offer the same assurances to those in EU countries.

The majority of seed brought into Northern Ireland comes from England, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland. This proposed EU provision of equivalence makes importation of seed from Moldova and Ukraine possible in Northern Ireland.

Department(s) Responsible

The Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

Initial Assessment of Impact

It does not appear likely that the application of the proposed amendment to Council Decision 2003/17/EC would have any significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland.

The majority of seed brought into Northern Ireland comes from England, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland, and the assessment is that this is unlikely to change. This proposed EU provision of equivalence makes importation of seed from Moldova and Ukraine possible in Northern Ireland, opening trade routes should our usual sources of supply fail.

UK Government Explanatory Memorandum

A UK Government Explanatory Memorandum has not been commissioned for this piece of legislation as GB colleagues have deduced that the proposal will have minimal impact on UK Plant Varieties and Seeds.

Analysis by the European Commission on its Impact Assessment

This is a Decision of a purely technical nature, implementing existing rules. The granting of equivalence of field inspections carried out in third countries on seed-producing crops and of equivalence of seed produced in third countries is based on the OECD Seed Schemes for the Varietal Certification of Seed moving in International Trade and the methods of the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA). No significant economic, social or environmental impacts are expected, thus an impact assessment is not justified.

Departmental Engagement

DAERA officials have engaged with colleagues across the relevant UK Government departments by correspondence. Colleagues see no significant impacts of this proposal, as the likelihood of seed from the Republic of Moldova or Ukraine coming to Northern Ireland is minimal. Colleagues indicated that there have been no equivalence applications received by GB from these countries.