

continuing 'protein deficit' in Europe are real considerations. Enforcement of the judgement will be problematic, given the difficulties to distinguish products from NBTs from conventional products. This was also identified by Member States during discussions in the Agri Council.

NL noted the links between NBTs and decreased pesticide use.

Pesticides

NL suggested that in discussing reduction targets, there is a need to distinguish between insecticides, herbicides and fungicides. Whilst a target for herbicides could be feasible, it would be more difficult for fungicides, as their use is closely linked to weather conditions, rainfall, etc. He informed, with disapproval, that his region (Baden-Württemberg) had recently set a target of 50% reduction in pesticide use by 2025. The debate must be informed by science.

AB noted that whilst Member States have ambitious national plans, considerable improvements are needed in implementation. A vision is needed on where we should be on pesticide use in five years. And for this, agreement is firstly needed on the status quo. Debate in AGRI and ENVI could usefully contribute to this agenda. She informed that the REFIT evaluation of the pesticides legislation is more or less complete to be most likely communicated under the next Commission. The Report of the PEST Committee was taken into account in identifying room for improvement. **AB** raised the issue of clothianidin which exposes the EU to litigation from WTO or in the ECJ and might set a precedent for future MRL decisions.

NL needed to be reminded the case but shared the concern of the Commission on this point. He highlighted that the new EP might increasingly take a greener perspective on trade related issues. He also remarked that the pesticide-sceptics in the Parliament will not be convinced by improvements in sustainable use: their aim is for zero pesticides in the EU.

Animal Welfare

NL believes the new Parliament will be more ambitious on animal welfare. He detects progress on welfare in Eastern Europe, perhaps changing the old dynamic of North versus South/East on attitudes. This may lead to some new Member States joining the push for higher standards / new legislation. He recalled Janusz Wojciechowski, the Polish nominee for Commissioner and putative holder of the Agriculture portfolio, as being very ambitious on animal welfare during his time as an MEP. On animal transport, he suggested a need to differentiate between animal transport to slaughter and transport generally. He expects a push for an animal welfare framework law from the new Parliament.

AB agreed that a framework law on animal welfare will likely be on the Parliament agenda. There is scope for considerable improvement in implementation in many areas, such as tail-docking of pigs and animal transport. Although, the findings of our auditors indicate that the laws on transport are largely being complied with and that problems tend to arise associated with export to third countries.


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