

Council Directive 93/85/EEC of 4 October 1993 on the control of potato ring rot

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on the control of potato ring rot

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Article 43 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission<sup>(1)</sup>,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament<sup>(2)</sup>,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee<sup>(3)</sup>,

Whereas potato production occupies an important place in Community agriculture; whereas the potato yield is constantly threatened by harmful organisms;

Whereas, through the protection of potato cultivation against such harmful organisms, not only should productive capacity be maintained but agricultural productivity should also be increased;

Whereas protective measures to prevent the introduction of harmful organisms into the territory of a Member State would have only a limited effect were such organisms not controlled simultaneously and methodically throughout the Community and not prevented from spreading;

Whereas one of the harmful organisms on potatoes is *Clavibacter michiganensis* (Smith) Davis et al. ssp. *sepedonicus* (Spieckermann et Kotthoff) Davis et al., the pathogenic agent of the potato ring rot disease; whereas this disease has occurred in some parts of the Community and some limited sources of infection still exist;

Whereas there is a considerable risk to potato cultivation throughout the Community if effective measures are not taken to locate this disease and determine its distribution, to prevent it from occurring and spreading, and, if found, to prevent its spread and to control it with the aim of eradication;

Whereas, in order to ensure this, certain measures must be taken within the Community; whereas Member States must, in addition, be able to take additional or stricter measures where necessary, provided that there is no hindrance to the movement of potatoes within the Community, except in so far as laid down in Council Directive 77/93/EEC of 21 December 1976 on protective measures against the introduction into the Member States of organisms harmful to plants or plant products<sup>(4)</sup>; whereas such measures must be notified to the other Member States and to the Commission;

Whereas Council Directive 80/665/EEC of 24 June 1980 on the control of potato ring rot<sup>(5)</sup>, laid down minimum measures to be taken by the Member States against potato ring rot;

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Whereas, since then, there have been significant developments in the understanding of potato ring rot disease and the detection of the potato ring rot pathogen;

Whereas the application of the Community plant health regime to the Community as an area without internal frontiers has called for the re-examination and revision of some provisions of Directive 80/665/EEC;

Whereas, as a result of such re-examination, the provisions of Directive 80/665/EEC have been found insufficient, and further specification of measures is necessary;

Whereas, in that situation, Directive 80/665/EEC should be repealed and the necessary measures adopted;

Whereas the measures have to take into account, first, that the disease can remain latent and unobserved both in the growing crop and in stored tubers, and so can be effectively prevented only by production and use of seed potatoes free from infection and, secondly, that systematic official surveys are necessary to locate it; whereas spread of the pathogen within the growing crop is not the most important factor, but whereas the pathogen can exist through the winter in self-sown (volunteer) potato plants and these are the major source of infection being carried from one season to the next; whereas the pathogen is spread mainly by the contamination of potatoes through contact with infected potatoes and through contact with planting, harvesting and handling equipment or transport and storage containers which have become contaminated with the organism by previous contact with infected potatoes; whereas such contaminated objects can remain infectious for some time after such contamination; whereas spread of the pathogen can be reduced or prevented by disinfection of such objects; whereas any such contamination of seed potatoes poses a major risk for the spread of the pathogen;

Whereas, for the determination of the details of such general measures, as well as for those stricter or additional measures taken by Member States to prevent the introduction of the pathogen into their territory, it is desirable for Member States to cooperate closely with the Commission within the Standing Committee of Plant Health (hereinafter referred to as 'the Committee'),

HAS ADOPTED THIS DIRECTIVE:

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- (1) OJ No C 93, 2. 4. 1993, p. 12.
- (2) OJ No C 176, 28. 6. 1993, p. 210.
- (3) OJ No C 161, 14. 6. 1993, p. 18.
- (4) OJ No L 26, 31. 1. 1977, p. 20. Directive as last amended by Commission Directive 92/103/EEC (OJ No L 363, 11. 12. 1992, p. 1).
- (5) OJ No L 180, 14. 7. 1980, p. 30.