

Sicco Mansholt, A decisive step towards the common agricultural policy (1965)

Caption: In February 1965, Sicco Mansholt, Vice-President of the European Commission, reviews the decisions adopted by the Council of Ministers on 15 December 1964.

Source: Bulletin of the European Economic Community. Dir. of publ. European Economic Community. February 1965, n° 2. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. "A decisive step towards the Common Agricultural Policy", auteur:Mansholt, Sicco , p. 7.

Copyright: All rights of reproduction, public communication, adaptation, distribution or dissemination via Internet, internal network or any other means are strictly reserved in all countries.

The documents available on this Web site are the exclusive property of their authors or right holders.

Requests for authorisation are to be addressed to the authors or right holders concerned.

Further information may be obtained by referring to the legal notice and the terms and conditions of use regarding this site.

URL: http://www.cvce.eu/obj/sicco_mansholt_a_decisive_step_towards_the_common_agricultural_policy_1965-en-39a12d43-6ddf-4950-899d-44df9d39c9c0.html

Publication date: 16/09/2013

A decisive step

by Dr Sicco L. Mansholt,
Vice-President of the Commission

The decisions taken by the Council on 15 December 1964 are of outstanding importance. For agriculture itself they mean that the framework elaborated in recent years has now been given concrete content. Three important consequences of these decisions spring to mind.

1. From 1 July 1967 there will be one uniform grain price throughout the Community, and there will be no further need for the system of levies now applied in intra-Community trade.
2. Community farmers now know where they stand and can take the necessary steps to adapt themselves to the new situation.
3. The Community can now really get down to negotiations with non-member countries in the Kennedy round on the binding of the margin of support and also — as required under the Commission's terms of reference for the Kennedy round — on the level of world market prices.

It is therefore no exaggeration to say that the effects of the decisions will be felt on international markets as well as in the Community.

Nor is the significance of these decisions limited to agriculture. The most evident impact is on the institutional plane. The Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund will dispose of enormous sums, and how they are spent will be decided at Community level.

From 1967 onward, decisions concerning prices will always be taken at Community level, which means that one of the objectives laid down in the Rome Treaty — substitution of Community for national policy — will have been attained. Now that this decisive step has been taken in one sphere of economic life, we may expect similar measures to follow in other fields. It is hard to see how we can confine such moves to agriculture and continue to pursue exclusively national policy elsewhere. The need for Community commercial and transport policies seems now to be quite evident, and rapid progress must also be made in harmonizing the conditions of competition and of monetary and tax policy.

As more and more decisions at Community level are taken, it will become increasingly clear that the institutional structure of the Community has to be adapted. National parliaments play an important part in national policy-making, while the European Parliament has hardly any influence at all on Community decisions; the question of its powers will rapidly come to the fore.

The important decisions taken on 15 December mark the beginning of the common agricultural policy. Details for the implementation of these decisions must be worked out this year so that the common policy can be completed.

We have a busy year before us, but we look ahead with complete confidence because we know that the foundation has been laid and that there is no going back.