

18 March 2010: The European competition authorities are mobilizing in order to provide advice and solutions to public authorities and to farmers affected by the milk crisis

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The European Commission has involved the national competition authorities, including the French Autorité, in the preparation of guides that present the solutions that competition law can provide so as to strengthen the negotiating power of producers relative to processors (agro-food industry): agreements aiming at facilitating the marketing of new products or labels, as well as, according to various provisions, common production, collection or sale agreements that would result in a single price for sale to processors, and the use of marketing mandates. Of course, these solutions can also be implemented within a cooperative framework. These documents can be consulted at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/competition/sectors/agriculture/documents_en.html

These analyses follow on the constructive proposals contained in the opinion issued by the Autorité de la concurrence, on October 2nd, 2009, that had primed the debate by examining the operation of the dairy sector at the request of the French Senate's Economic affairs committee.

These analyses will contribute to the reflections of parliamentarians, who are preparing to examine the Government bill on the modernization of agriculture, and those of the high level group on milk, created on the initiative of the Council of Ministers of the European Union, which brings together the European Commission and the representatives of the Member States.