COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 2296/2003

of 23 December 2003

derogating, for 2004, from Regulation (EC) No 327/98 opening and providing for the administration of tariff quotas for imports of rice and broken rice

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1095/96 of 18 June 1996 on the implementation of the concessions set out in Schedule CXL drawn up in the wake of the conclusion of the GATT XXIV(6) negotiations ([1]), and in particular Article 1 thereof,

Having regard to Council Decision 96/317/EC of 13 May 1996 concerning the conclusion of the results of the consultations with Thailand pursuant to GATT Article XXIII ([2]), and in particular Article 3 thereof,

Whereas:

(1) The accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia to the European Union on 1 May 2004 should enable those countries to qualify for the tariff quotas for imports of rice and broken rice introduced by Commission Regulation (EC) No 327/98 ([3]) under fair conditions compared with those applicable to the existing Member States. Economic operators in those countries must be given the possibility therefore of participating fully in those quotas upon accession.

(2) In order not to create disturbance on the market before and after 1 May 2004, the timetable for the tranches provided for in 2004 must be altered and the allocation of quantities adjusted without, however, altering the overall quantities provided for in the international agreements concluded in accordance with GATT Articles XXIII and XXIV(6), i.e. annual tariff quotas for imports of 63 000 tonnes of semi-milled and wholly milled rice covered by CN code 1006 30 at zero duty, 20 000 tonnes of husked rice covered by CN code 1006 20 at a fixed duty of EUR 88 per tonne and 80 000 tonnes of broken rice covered by CN code 1006 40 with a reduction of EUR 28 per tonne in the import duty.

(3) The alterations and adjustments provided for in this Regulation must replace for 2004 the measures laid down in Article 2(1) of Regulation (EC) No 327/98.

(4) The measures provided for in this Regulation are in accordance with the opinion of the Management Committee for Cereals,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

In derogation from Article 2(1) of Regulation (EC) No 327/98 the annual tariff quotas referred to in Article 1 of that Regulation shall be opened, for 2004, for imports into the Community subject to the following conditions:

([1]) OJ L 146, 20.6.1996, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 122, 22.5.1996, p. 15.
([3]) OJ L 37, 11.2.1998, p. 5. Regulation as last amended by Regulation (EC) No 2458/2001 (OJ L 331, 15.12.2001, p. 10).