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PRESS STATEMENT

Food Safety on the Agenda

Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture, Forestry, Food Related Issues and Fisheries of the Nordic and Baltic States and Russia in Tallinn, Estonia 7-8 November 2003. Food safety and organic production are among the topics on the Agenda.

7 November 17. 00 Press Conference, the Sigma room, Hotel Olympia Conference Centre, Liivalaia 33, Tallinn

- There will be some form of Nordic/Baltic entity within the next 15 years. The first step on the road to Nordic/Baltic entity has already been taken with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania invited for membership of the Nordic Investment Bank, NIB. Per Unckel, the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers is optimistic about a stronger cooperation between the Nordic and the Baltic states in general.

When it comes to Agriculture, Forestry, Food Related Issues and Fisheries the Nordic and Baltic States and Russia will meet for a Meeting of Ministers in Tallinn, Estonia 7-8 November.

The meeting, which will be hosted by Mr Tiit Tammsaar, Minister of Agriculture of Estonia and chaired by Ms Ann-Christin Nykvist, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries of Sweden, is expected to result in the adoption of three Ministerial declarations. One declaration focuses on enhancing cooperation between the Nordic and Baltic states in order to increase food safety in the Nordic/Baltic region. Another declaration has the aim to develop the organic food and agriculture production in the Nordic and Baltic states. In a third declaration the future focus of cooperation between the countries is proposed to be on agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food issues. The Ministers will also discuss genetic resources and international issues of common interest.

Saturday, 8 November the ministers will go on a study trip with focus on the food chain - from production and processing to marketing and sales.

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