



Antitrust: Commission sends Statement of Objections to Riberebro alleging participation in canned mushrooms cartel

Brussels, 28 May 2015

The European Commission has informed Grupo Riberebro Integral S.L. and its subsidiary Riberebro Integral S.A.U. that it suspects the companies of having breached EU antitrust rules by colluding with competitors on both customer allocation and the pricing of canned mushrooms in the European Economic Area (EEA). Sending a Statement of Objections does not prejudice the outcome of the investigation.

The Commission has concerns that Riberebro may have colluded with other market participants within the EEA to allocate customers and coordinate prices of so-called "private label" canned mushrooms (i.e. manufactured by one company to be sold under another company's brand name). If established, such behaviour would violate EU rules that prohibit anti-competitive business practices such as collusion on prices and market sharing (Article 101 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Article 53 of the EEA Agreement).

Background

The Commission's investigation started with unannounced inspections in February 2012. In [June 2014](#), the Commission adopted a settlement decision against three companies that admitted their involvement in the cartel – Bonduelle, Lutèce and Prochamp. The total fines imposed were €32 225 000. The investigation concerning Riberebro continued under the standard cartel procedure.

A Statement of Objections is a formal step in Commission investigations into suspected violations of EU rules on restrictive business practices. The Commission informs the parties concerned in writing of the objections raised against them and the companies can examine the documents in the Commission's investigation file, reply in writing and request an oral hearing to present their comments on the case before representatives of the Commission and national competition authorities.

If, after the parties have exercised their rights of defence, the Commission concludes that there is sufficient evidence of an infringement, it can adopt a decision prohibiting the conduct and imposing a fine of up to 10% of a company's annual worldwide turnover.

More information on this case will be available under the case number [39965](#) in the [public case register](#) on the Commission's competition website.

IP/15/5065

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