

Question for written answer E-002843/2025
to the Commission
Rule 144
Asger Christensen (Renew)

Subject: Classification of poultry by-products and obstacles to biogas use

Each year, millions of spent hens in Denmark, Sweden and Finland pose a logistical and sustainability challenge because of insufficient slaughterhouse capacity. The only specialised facility in the region operates well below the scale needed to process the volume of end-of-lay hens.

Mobile slaughter systems, such as the Danish BioChick solution, offer a practical and animal welfare-friendly alternative. The process involves the hens being stunned, inspected by a veterinary surgeon, and acidified to a pH of 2 to yield a product suitable for biogas generation. However, under Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009¹, this material is classified as Category 2, whereas it would be Category 3 if processed in a traditional slaughterhouse. This classification prevents its use in renewable energy, despite similar hygiene and safety standards and better animal welfare standards.

In parallel, new EU transport rules may further restrict long-distance movement of spent hens, increasing the relevance of mobile slaughter and biogas conversion as one of the few sustainable solutions.

1. Does the Commission consider this classification proportionate when equivalent standards are met?
2. Will the Commission revise the rules to allow Category 3 classification in such cases?
3. How does the Commission plan to support biogas use of spent hens in areas without adequate slaughter capacity?

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¹ Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 (Animal by-products Regulation) (OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2009/1069/oj>).