

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000324/25
to the Commission
Regina Doherty (PPE)
(24 January 2025)**

Subject: EU-Mercosur agreement

The Commission assures citizens that EU food safety standards will be respected for imported products under the proposed EU-Mercosur agreement, even if sanitary and phytosanitary checks have been reduced and customs procedures simplified.

What specific assurances can the Commission provide in terms of respect for EU production standards and product quality?

There are currently significant discrepancies between the two parties in terms of production standards, which is impacting exposed sectors, with EU producers having to respect a greater number of regulations, with less support at their disposal and higher labour costs and standards. These discrepancies may also have implications for the level playing field for farmers, as well as for the guarantee of quality, safety and sustainability standards expected by consumers.

Submitted: 24.1.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(6 April 2025)**

Food produced or imported in the EU, must comply with EU's sanitary and phytosanitary standards. No food containing residues of pesticides at a level posing a health risk can be placed on the market or imported. This applies regardless of trade agreements with third countries, including Mercosur.

The Commission conducts regular audits in third countries and works closely with Member States authorities that perform official controls and enforcement activities on imported food to ensure that non-compliant products cannot enter the EU market.

As presented in the communication A Vision for Agriculture and Food on 19 February 2025 ⁽¹⁾, the Commission will reinforce its actions in this regard. The Union approach to a fairer global playing field will consist of two-fold action that must go hand in hand.

Besides strengthening a stricter implementation of internationally agreed commitments, the Commission will present in 2025 its line of action on deepening reciprocity to the Member States for further elaboration.

At the same time, the Union will ensure domestically that ambitious EU standards do not lead to economic, environmental and social leakages.

The Commission will pursue, in line with international rules, a stronger alignment of production standards applied to imported products, notably on pesticides and animal welfare.

⁽¹⁾ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions — A vision for Agriculture and Food Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations COM/2025/75 final <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025DC0075>