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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(30.7.2025)

The decision of the United Kingdom (UK) to leave the phytosanitary regime of the EU implies that the EU's requirements and restrictions that apply to imports of plants from non-EU countries also apply to imports from Great Britain (GB). Among these is the import prohibition of seed potatoes from non-EU countries that do not align with the EU rules. The UK applies a similar import requirement that affects EU exports of seed potatoes to GB. The Commission has submitted export authorisation applications corresponding to exports from three Member States, the assessment of which is still to be carried out by the UK.

The Commission is examining a request from the UK to authorise the import into the EU of seed potatoes from certain areas in GB. The findings of the recent audit on the system of official controls and the certification of seed potatoes in GB are among elements being considered in the Commission's assessment.

Any authorisation to import into the EU commodities subject to specific requirements will be subject to the relevant EU decision-making procedures. A sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) agreement between the EU and UK, as outlined in the EU-UK renewed agenda Common Understanding of 19 May 2025, based on dynamic alignment with EU rules with corresponding governance rules, including the role of the Court of Justice of the EU could, of course, change this situation.