

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002145/25
to the Commission
René Aust (ESN)
(28 May 2025)**

Subject: Protecting domestic agriculture from imports produced to lower standards

The Mercosur agreement and other free trade agreements open the door to an influx of imports of agricultural products produced to lower environmental and social standards.

Is the introduction of mandatory import controls or mirror clauses being considered?

Submitted: 28.5.2025

**Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(26 August 2025)**

The access of agricultural products to the EU market under the EU-Mercosur Partnership Agreement has been carefully calibrated: for certain sectors, such as beef, poultry or sugar, preferential access is limited in volume representing only a small fraction of the EU consumption.

Animal, plant and food products placed on the EU market, whether domestically produced or imported from any third country, must comply with the EU's sanitary and phytosanitary requirements. These requirements are not negotiable and apply regardless of trade agreements concluded with third countries, such as the EU-Mercosur Agreement.

As outlined in the Commission's 'A Vision for Agriculture and Food' ⁽¹⁾, the Union will strive toward fairer global level playing field for agriculture.

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

It will establish a principle that the most hazardous pesticides banned in the EU for health or environmental reasons are not allowed back to the EU through imported products based on an impact assessment, which the Commission intends to launch this year. In the communication, the Commission also announced a dedicated task force to further strengthen controls on imports.

Many EU measures targeted at enhancing the sustainability of products also apply to EU imports: the EU Deforestation Regulation ⁽²⁾, the regulation to ban forced labour products ⁽³⁾, the prohibition of the use of antibiotics or antimicrobials for the purpose of promoting growth or to increase yield ⁽⁴⁾ and the lowering the Maximum Residues Level for two neonicotinoids known to contribute to the decline of pollinators ⁽⁵⁾.

⁽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>.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 May 2023 on the making available on the Union market and the export from the Union of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation.

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/3015 on prohibiting products made with forced labour on the Union market and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937.

⁽⁴⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/905 of 27 February 2023 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2019/6 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the application of the prohibition of use of certain antimicrobial medicinal products in animals or products of animal origin exported from third countries into the Union as listed in the annex of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1255 as growth promoters.

⁽⁵⁾ Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/334 amending Annexes II and V to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 lowering the maximum residue levels (MRLs) for clothianidin and thiamethoxam.