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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(2.9.2025)

1. Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011¹ ensures that information on the origin of food is sufficiently precise and meaningful. It prevents misleading food origin information by requiring the indication of the country of origin or place of provenance where its omission could mislead the consumer, e.g., through the featuring of pictures. The provisions of this Regulation are directly applicable, and Member States' authorities are responsible for their implementation and enforcement.

2. In its Communication 'A Vision for Agriculture and Food'², the Commission expressed its intention to consider to 'propose an extension of the country of origin labelling in line with sectoral specificities and Single Market rules'.

3. Verification of food labelling is within the scope of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on official controls³. Member States must have official control systems in place that are risk-oriented, to ensure that the rules on information provided to consumers are complied with. In accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 and Regulation (EU) 2017/625, Member States must also impose penalties which, in cases of fraud, reflect at least either the economic advantage for the operator or a percentage of the operator's turnover. The Commission's role is to verify that national control systems comply with the abovementioned Regulation on official controls by conducting audits. In that context, the Commission conducted audits in 2017 in four Member States⁴ to evaluate the official control systems in place related to the provision of food information to consumers, including indication of country of origin, and recommended appropriate follow-up actions to address any weaknesses found.

¹ Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004 *OJ L 304*, 22.11.2011, p. 1.

² COM/2025/75 final.

³ Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products, amending Regulations (EC) No 999/2001, (EC) No 396/2005, (EC) No 1069/2009, (EC) No 1107/2009, (EU) No 1151/2012, (EU) No 652/2014, (EU) 2016/429 and (EU) 2016/2031 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Regulations (EC) No 1/2005 and (EC) No 1099/2009 and Council Directives 98/58/EC, 1999/74/EC, 2007/43/EC, 2008/119/EC and 2008/120/EC, and repealing Regulations (EC) No 854/2004 and (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directives 89/608/EEC, 89/662/EEC, 90/425/EEC, 91/496/EEC, 96/23/EC, 96/93/EC and 97/78/EC and Council Decision 92/438/EEC (Official Controls Regulation).

⁴ France, Greece, Portugal and Lithuania. Full audit reports are available at <https://ec.europa.eu/food/audits-analysis/audit-report>.