

EN

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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(4.9.2025)

1. As set out in the Vision for Agriculture and Food¹, the EU aims to promote sustainable and fair agri-food systems, which includes ensuring that high animal welfare standards apply not only within the EU but also to imported products, in compliance with the EU's World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations. In the Vision, the Commission commits to ensuring that future legislative proposals in the area of animal welfare will apply equivalent standards to imported products that fall within its scope in ways that are compliant with WTO obligations. In line with the principles of better regulation, the upcoming proposal on on-farm animal welfare will be accompanied by a comprehensive impact assessment, which will include a thorough assessment of the trade dimension.

2. EU legislation already requires that imported products meet certain animal welfare standards. Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing² applies to third country establishments exporting meat to the EU, and 100% documentary checks are made at border points. The competent authority of the exporting country must provide a signed attestation certifying that these standards are complied with. Furthermore, these requirements are monitored by the Commission through a risk-based programme of controls, with regular audits in third countries, that include checks on third countries' regulatory framework and their follow up to Commission recommendations. The Commission cooperates closely with third country authorities to verify compliance and follows up with actions when needed.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0075>.

² <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2009/1099/oj>.