

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002990/25
to the Commission
Mathilde Androuët (Pfe)
(17 July 2025)

Subject: The lack of reciprocal standards in agricultural trade with Ukraine

A recent report resulting from a dialogue involving experts, qualified representatives of agricultural sectors and NGOs ⁽¹⁾ has once again warned about the consequences, for our livestock and arable farmers, of the and imbalances in our trading relations with other agricultural powers. The authors highlighted the instruments included in the European ‘toolbox’ of reciprocity measures.

1. The Commission is still encouraging massive imports of Ukrainian agricultural products (poultry, cereals, eggs, etc.), which fail to comply with any EU production standards in the areas of the environment, animal health or the use of pesticides and antibiotics. Can the Commission explain why this is the case, given that it is at odds with various EU regulations and directives and with the guidance reaffirmed in the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy, with which our farmers are required to comply?

2. Given that the failure to comply with EU standards is a major source of unfair competition and is contributing to the economic decline of our industries, what commitments and measures does the Commission intend to undertake to require, without delay, strict equivalence of standards for any product imported into the European Union?

Submitted: 17.7.2025

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission
(3 September 2025)

1. On 30 June 2025, an agreement in principle was reached ⁽¹⁾ between the EU and Ukraine on the review of the tariff liberalisation under the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. In view of Ukraine’s accession perspective, the additional market access granted under this review is conditional on Ukraine’s alignment to the EU agricultural production standards by 2028, including on animal welfare, environmental protection, use of pesticides and veterinary medicines. The agreement also includes a robust safeguard mechanism enabling the adoption of appropriate measures in case of adverse effects including on one or several Member States markets.

2. Animal, plants and food products placed on the EU market, including those imported, must comply with the EU sanitary and phytosanitary requirements. These requirements are not negotiable and apply regardless of agreements concluded with third countries, including with Ukraine. Moreover, as outlined in the European Commission’s Communication ‘A Vision for Agriculture and Food’ ⁽²⁾, the EU also strives 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. In addition, many EU autonomous measures targeted at enhancing the sustainability of products placed on the EU market also apply to EU imports. These include, for instance, the EU Deforestation Regulation ⁽³⁾, the Forced Labour Regulation ⁽⁴⁾, the prohibition of the use of antibiotics as growth promoters ⁽⁵⁾ and lowering the maximum residues level for two neonicotinoids known to contribute to the decline of pollinators ⁽⁶⁾.

¹ ⁽¹⁾ Reciprocity of agricultural production standards in international trade, Report on the dialogue between agricultural sectors, NGOs and experts, July 2025.

⁽¹⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_1672.

⁽²⁾ https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/overview-vision-agriculture-food/vision-agriculture-and-food_en.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32023R1115&qid=1687867231461>.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/3015/oj/eng>.

⁽⁵⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2003/1831/oj/eng>.

⁽⁶⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/334/oj/eng>.