

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003412/25
to the Commission
Afroditi Latinopoulou (Pfe)
(3 September 2025)

Subject: Restrictions on beef production and the impact on European livestock farming and consumers

The continuous increase in the price of beef is attributed to the severe restrictions imposed on the pretext of reducing the amount of methane produced by cows. These policies result in a burden on European livestock farmers and an increase in food costs for the average family, while at the same time promoting imports from non-EU countries, to the detriment of domestic production.

In view of the above, the Commission is invited to reply to the following:

1. Given that the restrictions are causing an increase in the price of beef, directly affecting European families, how does the Commission justify this policy, which seems to be harmful to both citizens and the European livestock farming sector?
2. Considering that the restrictions on European beef production are leading to increases in food prices and boost competition from imports from outside Europe, to what extent does the Commission consider their continuation justified?
3. Will the Commission consider lifting or relaxing restrictive measures in order to protect the European livestock farming sector, lower prices and safeguard Europe's food sovereignty?

Submitted: 3.9.2025

Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(3 November 2025)

The EU does not impose restrictions on methane emissions from beef cattle. Emissions from agriculture are included in the Effort Sharing Regulation ⁽¹⁾ (ESR), together with emissions from domestic transport, buildings, small industries, and waste.

Under the ESR all those emissions together should be reduced by 40% by 2030 (compared to 2005) and that EU-level target translates into differentiated targets per Member State.

Member States have a single target covering all emissions in the sectors mentioned above and can design their climate change mitigation action accordingly and decide on the corresponding contribution of the sectors covered by the ESR.

The EU does not restrict beef production. The decline in EU beef production is the result of multiple factors. Productivity gains and genetic improvements in the dairy sector lead to more milk production with fewer animals, reducing the availability of cattle for beef production.

The EU beef sector is experiencing issues with profitability, which causes reduction in farm numbers and/or a switch to dairy production or other activities.

The EU actively supports the beef sector. by coupled income support (targeted to sectors undergoing difficulties) in the context of the Common Agricultural Policy.

In its proposals for post-2027 period, the Commission has proposed to further increase the maximum ceiling for coupled support to 20%, with a possibility for additional 5% increase if Member States consider it necessary.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2018/842.