(English version)

Question for written answer E-003587/25
to the Commission
Tobiasz Bocheński (ECR)
(17 September 2025)

Subject: Current Commission policy on European agriculture

In view of the increasing dependence on imports of agricultural products, the Commission should boost Europe's self-sufficiency when it comes to food and reduce the risks of supply chains being destabilised. The Commission should suspend the ratification process for the EU-Mercosur agreement, which as it stands represents unfair competition for European farmers. The Commission should also make efforts to halt both the continuing decline of small and medium-sized farms and rural depopulation. Farmers are not asking for privileges: they are asking to be treated fairly. To weaken farming is to weaken Europe.

In response to an appeal by European agricultural organisations expressing deep concern about EU agricultural policy, I would like to ask the following questions:

1. Will the Commission guarantee access to effective, safe agricultural inputs (NGTs, plant protection products, precision farming) and support the development of environmentally friendly technologies without imposing unrealistic restrictions?

2. Will the Commission introduce binding 'mirror rules' requiring importers to comply with environmental and production standards that are the same as those that apply in the EU?

Submitted: 17.9.2025

Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(3 March 2026)

Recognising the potential of plants obtained by new genomic techniques (NGTs) to support the competitiveness and resilience of the European agrifood sector, the Commission adopted a proposal ([1]) to enable the use of plants obtained with certain NGTs in the EU. The co-legislators reached a provisional political agreement on the proposal on 3 December 2025.

On 16 December 2025 the Commission submitted a Food and Feed Safety simplification package ([2]) to the co-legislators to accelerate market access for biocontrol plant protection products.

In the Vision for Agriculture and Food ([3]), it announced that it will carefully consider any further ban of pesticides if alternatives are not yet available, unless the pesticide represented a threat to human health or to the environment.

The Commission programmed over EUR 1800 million in research, innovation and knowledge exchange under Horizon Europe to address the needs of agriculture helping them become more competitive and resilient.

It is also announced in the Vision for Agriculture and Food that in line with international rules, a stronger alignment of production standards applied to imported products will be pursued, notably on pesticides and animal welfare.

It has established the principle that the most hazardous pesticides banned in the EU for health and environmental reasons should not be allowed into the EU through imported products.

On 25 November 2025, the Commission launched a study to consider the impacts of this principle on the EU's competitive position, as well as the international implications.

The Food and Feed Safety simplification package lays the ground for the Commission to act on specific active substances, if appropriate, in light of impact assessments ([4]).

([1]) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52023PC0411.
([2]) https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/simplification-legislation_en.
([3]) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0075.
([4]) Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulations (EC) No 999/2001, (EC) No 1829/2003, (EC) No 1831/2003, (EC) No 852/2004, (EC) No 853/2004, (EC) No 396/2005, (EC) No 1099/2009, (EC) No 1107/2009, (EU) No 528/2012, (EU) 2017/625 as regards the simplification and strengthening of food and feed safety requirements.
https://food.ec.europa.eu/document/download/b0817113-6edc-4219-b638-8060fee037d5_en?filename=horiz_omnibus_reg-com-2025-1030_en.pdf