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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
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In order to prevent the introduction into the EU of animal diseases, such as the highly pathogenic avian influenza, efficient rules on the entry into the Union of animals and products of animal origin that may transmit such diseases¹, and on official controls at the border², have been developed based on science, international standards, and in close cooperation with Member States, and have been in place for many years in the EU.

All animals, plants and food products placed on the EU market must comply with the EU's sanitary and phytosanitary requirements, whether they are produced domestically or imported from outside the EU. These requirements are not negotiable and apply regardless of any agreements with non-EU countries, such as the EU-Mercosur agreement.

Official controls at border control posts are mandatory for this type of commodities. They ensure that consignments that are found as non-compliant are refused entry into the territory of the Union. The Commission confirms that non-EU countries which are listed for the exports of animals and animal products into the Union are also regularly audited by the Commission. This is also the case for Mercosur countries.

Moreover, as outlined in the Commission's Communication 'A Vision for Agriculture and Food'³, the Union will strive 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 this Communication, the Commission also announced a dedicated task force to further strengthen controls on imports.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02016R0429-20210421>.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02017R0625-20250105>.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025DC0075>.