

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003912/25
to the Commission
Konstantinos Arvanitis (The Left)
(6 October 2025)

Subject: Immediate EU assistance to tackle sheep and goat pox in Greece — Investigation into the need to implement a vaccination campaign

The spread of sheep and goat pox in Greece is threatening the survival of the livestock sector, causing economic losses of hundreds of millions of euros. Livestock farmers consider vaccination essential. In particular, the National Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (ETHEAS) ⁽¹⁾ and the Hellenic Livestock Association (SEK) ⁽²⁾ have called for the implementation of targeted vaccination in areas where the disease is prevalent.

In addition, on the basis of the statements of the responsible Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi ⁽³⁾ and the recommendations of EU-VET, ⁽⁴⁾ the Commission has already put on the table the possibility of a vaccination campaign and is offering 500 000 doses from the EU vaccine bank. ⁽⁵⁾

Can the Commission say:

1. Is there an EU-approved vaccine for the strain of sheep and goat pox that has entered the EU?
2. Has there been an official request from the Greek Government for support in implementing a vaccination campaign or have you been informed of any intention of the Greek Government to take any initiative in implementing a vaccination programme?
3. If a vaccination programme, with an EU-approved vaccine, goes ahead, is it ensured that dairy products from vaccinated, disease-free animals will continue to be accepted on markets within or outside the EU?

Submitted: 6.10.2025

Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(20 January 2026)

1. Currently there is no approved sheep and goat pox (SGP) vaccine in the Union. Nonetheless, pursuant to the Veterinary Medicinal Products Regulation ⁽¹⁾, under certain specific circumstances, Member States' competent authorities may allow the use of a vaccine not authorised within the Union.
2. To date the Commission has only received, from the competent authorities of Greece, a request for scientific support, through the European Food Safety Authority, to help them on their final decision, whether to implement vaccination against SGP or not.
3. If a vaccination plan against SGP is implemented in Greece, dairy products from establishments under that plan would be subject to measures as laid down in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/361 ⁽²⁾ and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 ⁽³⁾. Where necessary, the Commission may also put in place other proportionate risk-mitigating measures, consistent with the standards of the World Organisation for Animal Health.

¹ <https://etheas.gr/etheas-kai-ellinikos-mosxos-gia-prolipsi-zoonoson-sta-vooeidi/>

² <https://www.ypaithros.gr/se-dramatiki-katastasi-i-elliniki-aigoprovatotrofia/>

³ <https://x.com/OliverVarhelyi/status/1970515489878401430?t=ehBDnX3U6hHOSNJmK2wHhw&s=19>

⁴ <https://meatplace.gr/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/SPGP-Expert-Mission-to-Greece.pdf>

⁵ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2025-002766-ASW_EN.html

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2019/6 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on veterinary medicinal products and repealing Directive 2001/82/EC (OJ L 4, 7.1.2019, pp. 43-167) <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/6/oj>.

⁽²⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/361 of 28 November 2022 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and the Council as regards rules for the use of certain veterinary medicinal products for the purpose of prevention and control of certain listed diseases (OJ L 52, 20.2.2023, pp. 1-42) http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2023/361/oj.

⁽³⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and the Council, as regards rules for the prevention and control of certain listed diseases (OJ L 174, 3.6.2020, pp. 64-139) http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2020/687/oj.