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Answer given by Mr Šefčovič
on behalf of the European Commission
(20.1.2026)

The political agreement reached by the President of the Commission and the President of the United States on 27 July 2025¹ and the ensuing Joint Statement², do not affect the EU's ability to regulate in the areas of animal welfare, the use of antibiotics or plant protection products. These matters remain within the scope of EU legislation. The Commission will continue to ensure that the relevant legislation is properly implemented and enforced.

The Vision for Agriculture and Food³ reaffirms that food and feed safety, as well as animal and plant health, are non-negotiable elements of the EU's policy on imports. The Commission will also pursue a stronger alignment of production standards applied to imported products, notably on pesticides and animal welfare, and a strengthening of import controls, drawing on expertise from the Commission and all 27 Member States⁴.

On 25 November 2025, the Commission launched a study as part of an impact assessment to strengthen alignment of the EU's production standards on most hazardous pesticides with requirements applicable to imported products, which aims to ensure a level playing field. The food and feed safety omnibus package⁵ that was presented on 16 December 2025 further confirms the goal of stronger alignment of production standards.

The Joint Statement does not question or undermine EU sanitary and phytosanitary requirements or food safety standards. The EU and the United States have committed to work on both sides' long standing concerns affecting trade in food and agricultural products, not to altering the substance of EU and United States standards.

¹ https://commission.europa.eu/topics/trade/eu-us-trade-deal_en.

² https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/news/joint-statement-united-states-european-union-framework-agreement-reciprocal-fair-and-balanced-trade-2025-08-21_en.

³ https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/overview-vision-agriculture-food/vision-agriculture-and-food_en.

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_2979.

⁵ The relevant documents have been published on this website: https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/simplification-legislation_en.