

EN

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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(14.7.2026)

The Commission publishes yearly the programme of planned audits of Member States and third countries in the area of food and feed safety, animal health, animal welfare and plant health.

The 2026 programme¹ reflects the Commission's commitment to increase by 50% its audits of third countries compared to 2025. The planned audits of third countries on food of non-animal origin cover microbiological risks, contaminants, pesticide residues and plant health aspects. Countries and commodities audited were prioritised on the basis of risks associated with their exports to the EU as well as past audits' outcome.

Since the application of Regulation (EU) 2017/625², Member States are to record the results of official controls on consignments of goods at border control posts and to communicate this through the Information Management System for Official Controls³ (Article 56 of the Regulation). This enables to obtain real-time reports. Therefore, no additional binding measures are needed in this area.

Where food of non-animal origin from third countries poses a contamination risk, the Commission may take measures through Regulation (EU) 2019/1793⁴. The Commission follows implementation by Member States – and confirms that it is satisfactory –, applies close monitoring of non-compliant commodities and countries, with frequency of checks increased as required. Under the Vision for Agriculture and Food⁵, the Commission pursues a stronger alignment of production standards applied to imported products, including measures to strengthen import controls. This includes to establish a task force to make import controls more efficient, which will focus e.g. on pesticide residues and will consider coordinated EU action on specific imported products.

¹ Health and food audits and analysis programme: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/5813aab4-c5bd-11f0-8da2-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/625/oj>.

³ A standardised format is available in the TRACES platform - https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/traces_en.

⁴ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2019/1793/oj.

⁵ COM/2025/75 final.