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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(17.7.2026)

In response to the audit and the Commission's request to ensure compliance, the Chinese competent authority committed to address shortcomings immediately and rapidly, and provided the Commission with an action plan to address the recommendations. The Honourable Member can avail of this action plan at the Commission website[1]. After assessing the action plan as satisfactory, the Commission services scheduled in the second semester of 2026 an on-site follow up audit to verify the implementation and effectiveness of the proposed actions.

The Commission ensures through audits that the exporting country can certify and guarantee the compliance with EU import requirements, or requirements deemed equivalent. When the EU audit identifies non-compliances, the trade partner is requested to produce an action plan containing corrections addressing those non-compliances. The Commission will have to follow up and ensure the good implementation of such corrective actions, including with on-site audits, when appropriate. In case the competent authority fails to provide an adequate action plan, the Commission may take corrective actions, including suspending imports.

The previous Commission audit covering poultry meat products and rabbit meat took place in 2017 and did not identify any significant shortcomings concerning animal welfare. The Commission has committed to a 50% increase in the number of audits carried out in third countries which is already reflected in the Director-General for Health and Food Safety audit programme which is publicly available[2].

[1] http://ec.europa.eu/food/audits-analysis/audit_reports/index.cfm.
[2] Health and food audits and analysis programme https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/5813aab4-c5bd-11f0-8da2-01aa75ed71a1/language-en.