

EN  
E-001795/2026  
Answer given by Mr Várhelyi  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(3.7.2026)

Member States have the primary responsibility for the implementation, application and enforcement of said Council Directives. Common requirements for official controls to verify compliance with these Directives are laid down in Regulation (EU) 2017/625<sup>1</sup>. To further ensure harmonisation, the Commission regularly performs audits to verify that Member States control systems fulfil the common requirements. The EU Reference Centre on pig welfare<sup>2</sup> provides publicly available guidance, supporting uniform implementation of EU rules.

As stated in the EU Vision for Agriculture and Food<sup>3</sup>, the Commission intends to closely exchange with farmers, the food chain and civil society, and on that basis present proposals on the revision of the existing animal welfare legislation, including its commitment to phase out cages. This work is progressing as planned and a legislative proposal for the first sector(s) is expected to be adopted by the end of 2026.

The Commission is not considering more stringent verification and audit requirements for animal welfare labelling. Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011<sup>4</sup> clearly prohibits any food information, including labels or claims, that is ambiguous, not based – where appropriate – on relevant scientific data, or could confuse or mislead consumers regarding the nature, identity, properties, method of production or other characteristics of the food. The competent authorities of the Member States are responsible for the enforcement of these provisions, by conducting regular, risk-based official controls.

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<sup>1</sup> Official Controls Regulation, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/625/oj/eng>.

<sup>2</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg\\_impl/2018/329/oj](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2018/329/oj).

<sup>3</sup> COM/2025/75 final.

<sup>4</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004 - OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, pp. 18–63.