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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
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To ensure compliance with EU food safety requirements, the Member States must carry out risk based official controls and enforcement activities in line with Regulation (EU) 2017/625¹. Where food of non-animal origin from third countries poses a risk, the Commission may adopt measures through Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1793². The results of official controls of consignments of Turkish peppers entering Greece does not raise concerns as regards detection of non-complaint consignments.

The Commission performs audits in Member States to verify in particular the application of the substantive rules and of the control rules. The Commission also performs audits in third countries to ensure that goods intended for export to the EU comply with the applicable EU rules and that the control system is capable of ensuring it³. An audit of the import control system in Greece is planned in late 2026 which will include the official controls on high-risk imported fruit and vegetables.

General monitoring of residues in the EU coordinated multiannual control programme is based on an assessment of European Food Safety Authority which identified 36 products but does not single out Greece or banned substances exclusively. Member States tailor their risk-based sampling programmes.

The Commission established a Task Force⁴ 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 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/625/oj>.

² https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2019/1793/oj.

³ https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/official-controls-and-enforcement/health-and-food-audits-and-analysis_en.

⁴ https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/official-controls-and-enforcement/import-controls-food-and-feed-qas_en.