

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001939/26
to the Commission
Jessika van Leeuwen (ECR), Sander Smit (ECR), Céline Imart (PPE)
(11 May 2026)**

Subject: Shipment of salmonella-contaminated chicken from Brazil

A shipment of Brazilian frozen chicken (3 tonnes) imported into Greece under the trade agreement between the EU and Mercosur — which recently entered into force — was found to be 80% contaminated with salmonella. The consignment was immediately returned to Brazil.

It had previously been pointed out in both the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) and the Committee on International Trade (INTA) that controls in Brazil are inadequate. The Commission had promised that controls would be tightened up under the trade agreement with Mercosur.

1. Is the Commission aware of this specific case of salmonella contamination, and how does it explain that such a high contamination rate was possible despite the alleged ‘tighter controls’?
2. How can the Commission guarantee that Brazilian poultry products comply with strict EU standards, given that Brazil itself acknowledges that it cannot fully guarantee its own control system and that problems with salmonella in Brazilian meat have been reported in the EU for years?
3. What concrete measures is the Commission taking to prevent such contamination from Mercosur countries reaching the European market and thereby further undermining the confidence of European consumers and the competitive position of European farmers and poultry farmers?

Submitted: 11.5.2026

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(22 July 2026)**

Imported poultry meat must comply with the microbiological criteria for foodstuffs laid down in Regulation (EU) 2073/2005. The authorities in the EU Member States carry out controls at border on imported products.

If they detect levels that go beyond those as laid down in that regulation, they are obliged to notify the Commission and the other Member States via the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF system).

In 2026, there have been no notifications made by Greece to the RASFF system regarding salmonella contamination in imports of Brazilian poultry meat or products thereof.

The EU import control system operates at several levels. It includes audits in third countries to verify that these countries have control systems in place which ensure that consignments of goods exported to the EU comply with the relevant EU requirements or with requirements equivalent thereto.

It also provides for mandatory controls at EU border control posts, including risk-based physical checks (which may include laboratory checks), to detect non-compliances upon entry.

In addition, Member States must carry out risk-based controls at any stage of production, processing and distribution, including for imported products.

Where specific risks are identified, additional measures are adopted, such as intensified official controls⁽¹⁾, or increased frequencies of physical checks for goods from specific third countries⁽²⁾. Where necessary, the Commission may adopt stricter measures such as restrictions of imports⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ In accordance with Regulation (EU) 2019/1873: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2019/1873/oj.

⁽²⁾ In accordance with Regulation (EU) 2019/2129: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2019/2129/2021-12-26.

⁽³⁾ Based on Regulation (EU) 2017/625: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/625/oj>.