

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002387/26
to the Commission
Mireia Borrás Pabón (Pfe)
(10 June 2026)**

Subject: Health risks in imports from Mercosur

The Commission was aware, prior to the signing of the EU-Mercosur Agreement, that some signatory countries, such as Brazil, permitted the use of substances banned in the EU because of their risks to human health, including certain antimicrobials and growth hormones in meat production. Furthermore, new cases of food contamination have been detected in recent weeks, including Salmonella in Brazilian poultry products.

Given this situation:

1. How does the Commission justify the signing and provisional application of the Agreement despite having prior knowledge of these health risks and the existing regulatory divergences?
2. Before the Agreement was signed, did the Commission have detailed reports or assessments warning of the health and food safety risks arising from the liberalisation of imports of meat products from Brazil?

Submitted: 10.6.2026

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission
(10 August 2026)**

Article 6.6(1) of the EU-Mercosur Interim Trade Agreement (ITA) ⁽¹⁾ provides that products exported from a Party shall meet the applicable sanitary or phytosanitary (SPS) requirements of the importing Party.

Products placed on the EU market, including from Mercosur or from any other countries, must continue to comply fully with all EU import rules.

This includes requirements on animal health, residue controls, and the prohibition of substances not authorised in the EU, such as certain growth promoters.

Imports of products of animal origin are subject to approval of exporting countries and establishments, residue monitoring, audits and border controls.

Before its conclusion, the Commission considered the effects of the Agreement. The Sustainability Impact Assessment ⁽²⁾ provides an examination of the potential economic, social, human rights and environmental impact of the trade component of an Agreement between the EU and Mercosur.

Separately, food and animal health risks linked to imports were assessed and managed through established procedures, including Commission audits, residue-control requirements, Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed ⁽³⁾ notifications, and country- and establishment-approval procedures.

When deficiencies in operators or control systems were identified, including in relation to certain Brazilian meat establishments, they were addressed through various measures, including more audits.

The ITA therefore does not require the EU to lower its SPS standards, and any market access remains conditional on continued compliance with EU law, with the EU retaining full power to monitor, restrict or suspend imports where necessary and regardless of the existence of a trade agreement with the trade partner in question.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A22026A00184&qid=1774426176108>.

⁽²⁾ <https://www.lse.ac.uk/business/consulting/assets/documents/SIA-in-Support-of-the-Association-Agreement-Negotiations-between-the-EU-and-Mercosur-Exec-Summary-EN.pdf>.

⁽³⁾ https://food.ec.europa.eu/food-safety/rasff_en.