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E-002411/2026

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič
on behalf of the European Commission
(4.9.2026)

The last substantial transformation as set out in Article 60(2) of the Union Customs Code (UCC)¹ is the underlying principle for the determination of the country of non-preferential origin, for products where more than one country or territory is involved in their production. The principle is anchored in the World Trade Organisation's Agreement on Rules of Origin and has been confirmed by European Court of Justice jurisprudence. The Commission is currently evaluating the UCC non-preferential rules of origin to assess whether they are still fit for purpose, though any adaptations will not deviate from the concept of the last substantial transformation. Therefore, no proposals are envisaged to remove agri-food products from that scope.

'Place of provenance' in Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011² is distinct from 'country of origin'. While the latter is determined by reference to the UCC legal framework and is used to determine the tariff treatment upon import, the former refers to any place where the food is indicated as coming from and not the country of origin (such as a region or the EU).

Geographical indications registered in the EU enjoy a high level of protection. Protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications are governed by the specific rules of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143³, which also lay out specific enforcement actions to prevent or stop the use of names that contravene this protection. The Commission has not identified any distortions stemming from EU customs legislation which would affect the protection of geographical indications registered in the EU.

¹ Regulation (EU) No 952/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 October 2013 laying down the Union Customs Code, *OJ L 269*, 10.10.2013, pp. 1–101 - <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/952/oj>.

² 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 - <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2011/1169/oj>.

³ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products, as well as traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms for agricultural products, amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2019/787 and (EU) 2019/1753 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, *OJ L*, 2024/1143, 23.4.2024 - <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1143/oj>.