

EN

P-002677/2024

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič
on behalf of the European Commission
(28.3.2025)

The EU's sanitary and phytosanitary standards are non-negotiable and are not affected by this or any other trade agreement. Imported products must always comply with the EU's strict food safety requirements because the EU's key priority is the health of its citizens – including food safety. To protect the health of EU citizens, the Commission also bans imports into the EU of all food products, including beef, from animals that have been treated with hormones and beta-agonists (such as oestradiol 17β).

Following an audit in 2024, the Commission recommended that Brazil improves its control system by taking corrective measures. Brazil is implementing these measures and has confirmed that only male animals will be considered eligible for export to the EU, thereby suspending exports of meat from female animals to the EU until the necessary guarantees are in place to ensure that meat from female animals destined for the EU market has never been treated with any hormones or beta-agonists for reproductive or zootechnical purposes.

As regards sensitive EU agriculture products, the Commission refers to its answer to question E-001988/2024¹, where it explains that the EU negotiated limited concessions in the form of tariff rate quotas that represent a small fraction of EU consumption. These partial openings will be phased in to allow the sectors to adjust. They will be coupled with safeguard clauses to protect the EU market in case of serious injury caused by Mercosur imports. The announced reserve of at least EUR 1 billion will provide an additional safety net for farmers and rural areas.

Mercosur countries will eliminate high tariffs on EU industrial exports, including sectors where the Netherlands have a competitive edge (e.g. mineral fuels and oils, machinery, pharmaceutical products, optical, medical-surgical, measuring instruments and vehicles) and on EU agricultural exports including for products where the Netherlands have a competitive edge (e.g. beer, vegetables). These tariffs reductions will make Dutch products more competitive and attractive to Mercosur consumers².

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2024-001988_EN.html

² More information on the economic benefits can be found on https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countries-and-regions/mercotur/eu-mercotur-agreement/factsheets-and-guides_en