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Answer given by Mr Šefčovič
on behalf of the European Commission
(4.2.2026)

The Commission acknowledges concerns about the EU-Mercosur Agreement and has taken steps to address them, including tariff quotas for sensitive agricultural sectors and robust safeguards.

The EU co-legislators are working on a regulation to allow a prompt start and end of investigations, allowing a reduction or suspension of trade preferences in case of harm to domestic producers. It includes a quasi-automatic threshold to trigger investigations set at a 5% increase in volumes or reduction in import prices, enabling a quick response to a serious injury or threat to EU's industry. Provisional measures can be imposed in three weeks.

All food products placed on the EU market must comply with EU sanitary and phytosanitary requirements. These are enforced through rigorous border controls and audits of third countries.

If a shortcoming is identified, the third country must put in place the necessary corrective measures. If insufficient, and there is a serious risk to human or animal health, the third country may be delisted and export authorisation to the EU may be suspended. The existence of a trade agreement as such does not alter this.

The Commission will also pursue a stronger alignment of production standards for imports, establishing a principle that the most hazardous pesticides banned in the EU for health or environmental reasons are not allowed in via imported products.

Besides, the Commission started an impact assessment for the modernisation of farm animal welfare rules, including introducing equivalent animal welfare standards for imports.

Finally, the Commission announced a task force to further strengthen controls on imports and a 50% increase of audits in third countries over the next two years.