



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 13 March 2012

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**WTO 94
COEST 72
AGRI 141**

NOTE

from: General Secretariat
to: Delegations

Subject: Russia's ban on live pigs imports from the EU
- Request from the Latvian delegation

Delegations will find in Annex a note submitted by the Latvian delegation to be presented under A.O.B. at the Council (Foreign Affairs/Trade) at its session on 16 March 2012.

Note to COREPER II (14.03.2012) and FAC (Trade) (16.03.2012)

On 2 March 2012 Russia announced a ban on livestock (cattle, small ruminants and swine) imports from the EU as of 20 March 2012 due to expansion of new Schmallenberg virus and non-compliance of import/export requirements by the EU economic operators.

Russia's step to ban live pigs' imports raises great concerns to swine-breeding industry in the EU since it is the major Russia's supplier comprising 90-95% of its respective imports.

Latvia is amongst those EU MS that will be particularly negatively affected by this prohibition, considering that more than 75% (19.8 million euro in 2011) of its live swine exports are destined to Russia. This data shows a substantial industry's dependence on Russia's market, closure of which will have devastating consequences to the industry. The outlook of the problem is similar also in other EU MS.

Latvia considers that Russia's intended live swine import ban from all the EU MS due to above mentioned reasons is disproportionate, questionable and unacceptable.

Moreover, this comes just a couple of months following approval of its WTO accession package by Ministers in Geneva with clear Russia's commitments to limit protectionist measures and to ensure sufficient level of predictability and rationality in its import regime for agricultural products.

Taking into account the importance of this issue to the EU and potential further spread of Russia's protectionist measures on agricultural products, e.g. pork, Latvia asks for inclusion of this issue in the agenda (under any other business item) of the forthcoming Foreign Affairs Council meeting on Trade Policy matters on 16 March 2012 to inform about concerns and to reflect by the Commission on the state of play and recent contacts with respective Russian services as well as on follow-up in the future.