



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 30 March 2017
(OR. en)

7845/17

AGRI 177
VETER 29

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

Subject: Meat fraud in Brazil

- *Information from the Commission on the state of play*

Delegations will find in Annex an information note from the Commission on the above mentioned subject to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") on 3 April 2017.

Meat fraud in Brazil

On 17 March 2017, the Commission learned from media reports about an investigation into meat fraud in Brazil, involving officials of the Brazilian Ministry of Livestock and Food Supply inspection (MAPA) in relation to the fraudulent release of licenses and irregular inspection of slaughterhouses.

On the same day, 17 March, the Commission asked the Brazilian authorities to urgently provide detailed information on the extent of these allegations and in particular about the products exported to the European Union. Brazil was also asked to immediately suspend certification for exports to EU from establishments implicated in the fraud pending their delisting. The Commission also asked the Brazilian authorities to outline the measures they would propose to address the reliability of the controls and the certification of exports and suggested that the certification of exports from all other establishments eligible to export to the EU should be suspended.

The Commission has asked Member States to maintain a high level of checks on consignments from Brazil and in particular a heightened level of physical checks, including checks for food hygiene. The Commission also requested that consignments from the establishments implicated in the fraud currently "en route" to the EU should be rejected with information to the Commission and other Member States through the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF).

On 19 March, Brazilian authorities provided a reply to the Commission letter explaining that there was no massive corruption but only a limited number of inspection officials under suspicion. In subsequent information exchanges with the Commission, it was confirmed that all five of the establishments implicated in the fraud would be delisted indefinitely from the list of establishments approved for export to the EU.

On 24 March, EU Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) met in Brussels. They expressed an appreciation as regards the Commission's quick reaction but also reiterated that they counted on strong and decisive actions from the Brazilian authorities to fulfil their obligations. The CVOs also asked that the Commission meet with the Member States on 29 March to ensure that there was a harmonised approach to the reinforced checks on consignments from Brazil at Border Inspection Posts (BIP). This is considered essential to provide a high and uniform level of health protection in the EU and to avoid any risk of controls being evaded by exploiting differences of approach between individual Member States. This requested "uniform approach" was agreed at the meeting of Member States' experts on 29 March.

In the light of the outcome of these reinforced checks, the evolution of the situation and the response of the Brazilian authorities to the demands for corrective measures, the Commission and the Member States will decide whether further measures are necessary. The Commission will also perform audits to Brazil as soon as possible and not later than mid-May.

Finally, Commissioner Andriukaitis met Brazilian Minister of Agriculture in Brazil on 28 March, during an official visit. He discussed the issue and requested additional information. It was agreed to hold a technical meeting in the coming days to receive more information from the judicial investigations. Commissioner Andriukaitis also took the opportunity to highlight the strong dissatisfaction of Member States with the difficulties in market access for EU agri-food exports to Brazil, which contrasted with the EU's transparent and constructive approach towards Brazil, including in the current situation.

The Commissioner will inform Ministers of the outcome of his visit to Brazil in more detail at the meeting of the [Agriculture and Fisheries Council](#) on 3 April.