Council of the European Union

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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Meat fraud in Brazil: State of play
	- Information from the Commission

Delegations will find in <u>Annex</u> an information note from the <u>Commission</u> on the above mentioned subject to be raised under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") on 12 June 2017.

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Meat fraud in Brazil: State of play

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.

Since this situation raised serious concerns about the safety of products imported from Brazil, the Commission and Member States jointly put in place the following measures immediately after they were informed of the fraud:

- Suspension of imports from the establishments implicated in the fraud that were approved for export to the EU. These establishments are now withdrawn from the list of premises authorised to export to the EU;

- Reinforcement of the import control checks. These checks now include 100% physical checks of all consignments of animal origin presented for import and 20% microbiological (laboratory) checks. Importers bear the costs of the checks.

The results of these checks at EU Border Inspection Posts until end of May 2017 are as follows:

- 4416 consignments checked including 1105 laboratory checks;

- 108 rejections: 77 for Salmonella on poultry meat, 4 for STEC (Shiga-toxin producing E. coli) on beef meat, 2 for drug residues on horse meat and 25 for other reasons.

In addition, an extensive Commission audit was carried out from 2 to 12 May 2017 to evaluate the operation of the Brazilian controls over the production of animal products intended for exports to the EU. The outcome of this audit raises important concerns which have already been brought to the attention of the Brazilian authorities in the draft final report on the audit. This includes a failure to act on recommendations to address shortcomings raised in previous audits.

When considered in the light of the meat fraud, especially its impact on the credibility of official controls in Brazil, these findings require urgent action by the Brazilian authorities. Accordingly, Commissioner Andriukaitis has written to the Brazilian Minister of Agriculture requesting:

- The delisting of all horse meat slaughterhouses and horse exporting companies from the list of establishments eligible for export to the EU.
- To not submit further requests for the addition of new establishments to the lists approved for export to the EU.
- To introduce 100% systematic pre-export microbiological checks for export of poultry meat and meat products and preparations from Brazil to the EU, backed-up by a health certificate stating that the consignment have been sampled and analysed in relation to the presence of salmonella strains and were found compliant with the EU legislation.

In the meantime, the current reinforced checks, which have demonstrated to be a solid barrier to the introduction of serious risk into the EU territory, will remain in place.

The Brazilian authorities have also been asked to provide a comprehensive plan of concrete corrective actions in response to the recommendations of the audit report, and to report regularly to the Commission on the progress with their implementation. The Commission will carry out a follow-up audit by the end of 2017 which will assess the effectiveness of these measures.

The Commission will closely monitor the situation and keep Member States regularly informed of developments.

Brazil is the first supplier of agricultural products to the EU, with EUR 13.1 billion of exports to the EU in 2015, most of it feedstock (soya beans) and coffee, with exports of EUR 1.7 billion of animal products, mostly beef and poultry.

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