



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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AGRI 436**

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: European Parliament's Resolution of 6 February 2014 concerning Commission implementing Regulation (EU) No 1337/2013 laying down rules for the application of mandatory indication of the country of origin or place of provenance for fresh chilled and frozen meat of swine, sheep, goats and poultry
- *Information from the Commission*

Delegations will find in the Annex a document submitted by the Commission to be presented under "Any other business" at the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") at its session on 16 June 2014.

Information paper on the labelling of origin or place of provenance for certain meats

This document seeks to inform the Council about the European Parliament resolution of 6 February 2014 on the Commission Implementing Regulation laying down rules for the application of the indication of the country of origin or place of provenance for certain meats¹.

Pursuant to Article 26 du Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council on the provision of food information to consumers (FIC), the Commission adopted on 13 December 2013 its Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1337/2013 on the compulsory indication on the country of origin of place of provenance for fresh, chilled and frozen meat of swine, sheep, goats and poultry.

The discussion of the regulation was preceded by a survey completed by an external consultant with the goal to assess the feasibility and the costs of various labeling options in relation to the several stages in the life of the animals concerned, an in particular the places of birth, rearing and slaughter. In a subsequent phase, the Commission presented its proposal, along with the impact assessment, to Member States in the Standing Committee of the Food Chain and Animal Health.

Following extensive discussions and several adjustments of the draft, the Regulation was supported by a qualified majority with 277 votes in favor, 38 abstentions and 37 votes against.

The regulation as adopted on 13 December 2013 provides for the compulsory indication of the Member State or third country of « rearing » and « slaughter ». These terms can only be replaced by the indication « origin » when the meat originates from animals born, reared and slaughtered in a single Member State or third country. The option for operators to indicate the place of provenance as « UE/non-UE » instead of the Member State or the third country concerned is confined to minced meat and trimmings (a similar option is provided for this kind of products by beef labelling rules).

¹ European Parliament Resolution of 6 February 2014, B7-0087/2014 / P7_TA-PROV(2014)0096.

In its resolution of 6 February 2014 the European Parliament (EP) stated that the said Implementing Regulation exceeds the execution powers granted to the Commission through Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 and calls on the Commission to withdraw the Implementing Regulation. The EP also requests the Commission to adopt an amended regulation embracing the obligation to indicate also the place of birth and all the rearing places (along the lines of the rules for beef) as well as to remove the flexibility for minced meat and trimmings, which should thus compulsorily indicate in the label the country of origin or place of provenance.

As far as the issue of competence is concerned, and according to the analysis of the Commission, it turns out that the Commission has used its powers within the strict limits defined by Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council. Indeed, should the Legislator have wished to apply the beef labelling model to the other meats, this should have been provided for in the basic act instead of asking the Commission to adopt implementing rules following an impact assessment of the various options for expressing the country of origin or the place of provenance, and in particular in relation to the three stages in the life of the animals. Furthermore, the basic act states that different approaches can be retained for the various species concerned depending on their characteristics and taking into account the principle of proportionality and the administrative costs for operators and public authorities.

From a technical point of view, it is to be highlighted that the labelling rules put forward by the EP in its resolution (compulsory indication of the place of birth) would require the setting up of individual identification systems and animal registers for pigs, sheep, goats and poultry as they exist nowadays for bovine animals. Indeed, such systems do not exist today.