



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Crisis preparedness in food, animals and plants
Unit G.4 Official controls

Minutes Expert Group on Veterinary Import Controls Legislation Wednesday, 10 April 2024, 10:00 – 17:00 Centre Albert Borschette Chair: Bruno Saimour, Unit G4		
1	Introduction	This was a face-to-face meeting with interpretation in 6 languages, for which a webstreaming link was also available for remote participants.
2	Brazil meat	COM informed the MSs that an audit on poultry meat took place in Brazil in November 2023. DG SANTE is currently assessing the action plan and the final report will soon be available.
3	Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2019/1014 on requirements for BCPs	COM presented the amendments to Regulation (EU) 2019/1014 currently under discussion in the Working Group on official controls, highlighting those concerning animals and animal products. MSs were reminded to provide their written comments to the functional mailbox SANTE-CONSULT-G4@ec.europa.eu in view of further discussion at the next meeting of the working group on official controls.
4a	Triangular trade	COM reminded the MSs that the term ‘triangular trade’ is not explicitly mentioned in Union legislation on animal health. There are specific animal health requirements for the entry into the EU of consignments of certain animals, germinal products and products of animal origin. As a general principle, recertification of products of animal origin by a third country different from the country where these products have been produced is not allowed when animal health guarantees apply. Unit G2 will consider providing further indicative information which might be used by the MS, if needed. DE requested that the special procedure for the export of fresh bovine meat to EU from Namibia and Botswana through South Africa be reflected in EU legislation. COM referred to audit reports where this special procedure has been transparently described for many years.
4b	Animal by-products	COM confirmed that the general requirements on animal by-products certification (e.g. replacement certificates) are under revision and will be aligned with the ones on products of animal origin. At the request of FR supported by ES, COM will verify if the monitoring procedure of used cooking oil can be simplified where the products are conveyed through dedicated pipes to the plant of destination.
5	Intensified official controls (IOC)	COM presented a statistical analysis of IOC requests submitted by MSs in the last six months and reminded the mandatory information to be provided with the requests. COM reminded MSs that IOC is a separate procedure from iRASFF. Therefore, MS must always notify and communicate all the necessary information through iRASFF in addition to the recording of unfavourable IOC results in TRACES. In the particular case of the UK, this exchange of information is also required by the TCA. At the request of MSs, COM will investigate possible access rights for MSs to CHEDs captured by an IOC, so that the MSs may have access to all the relevant details related to the performance of IOC measures.

		COM clarified that Art. 3(2) of Regulation 2019/1873 provides the legal basis to implement IOCs on processed animal proteins (PAPs), despite the special procedure laid down in Regulation 142/2011, Annex XIV, chapter I, section 2. Therefore, IOCs for the detection of Salmonella and enterobacteria can be activated for PAPs. COM clarified its position in relation to IOCs that are rejected when related to <i>Anisakis spp.</i> in frozen fish, as freezing is a method for killing <i>Anisakis</i>. MSs are invited to exempt consignments of frozen fish in case of active IOCs related to <i>Anisakis spp.</i>.
6	Frequency of physical checks in TRACES	COM informed the MSs about the application of Article 5(3) of Regulation (EU) 2019/2129 concerning the increase of the frequency rate of physical checks for certain goods from certain third countries. Every 6 months, COM will calculate the rejection rates based on the history of the last 12 months and adjust directly in TRACES the frequencies of physical checks of the concerned third countries for the following six months. Calculation of rejection rates and data processing via QlikSense will be done in March and September each year and the new frequency rates will apply from 1 April to 30 September and from 1 October to 31 March respectively. COM clarified that the frequency rates are modified directly in TRACES and the applicable frequency rates are available for all TRACES users under “Publications”. COM also sent an official letter to third countries informing them about the application of Article 5(3) of Regulation (EU) 2019/2129.
7	Transit to NATO bases	COM informed the MSs that it is still engaged in discussions with the US Command and NATO authorities concerning the certification issues on products of animal origin in transit to military bases. Meanwhile, and until the military aggression of Ukraine lasts, the current recommendation concerning application of flexibility for the certification of goods in transit to NATO bases remains valid, provided that consignments in transit can be monitored in TRACES until they reach the military base of destination. COM invited the MSs to share any problem they may face in relation to monitoring by NATO officials.
8	AOB	At the request of FR, COM will investigate possibility to validate CHED in TRACES in the case of simplified controls of internal transit at the point of re-entry in the EU FR informed other MSs that they expect congestion issues of rejected consignments in their BCPs as soon as the UK will start border controls on its side. So as to reduce the control delay, they might not require the prior agreement of other MSs of destination before it releases a consignment from GB re-entering the EU in the first 6 months. COM clarified that batch numbers in box I.27 in certificates should be considered as optional, unless specifically required by EU regulation. However, if they are mentioned in the certificate, they must match the information labelled on the products, as part of the identity check.
		The next meeting, scheduled for autumn 2024, will be held remotely.