



29.9.2014

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Subject: **Petition 1635/2013 by C.L. (German), on the EU-US free trade agreement and risks relating to food imports from the US**

1. Summary of petition

The petitioner is opposed to any further negotiation and to the signature of the EU-US free trade agreement, underlining the risks arising regarding the quality of food imports under this agreement, since the inspection procedures and preparation methods that ensure consumer safety prescribed and implemented under EU law are not carried out in the US, exposing consumers to health risks from substandard foods and possible contamination.

2. Admissibility

Declared admissible on 4 June 2014. Information requested from Commission under Rule 216(6).

3. Commission reply, received on 29 September 2014

Concerning food safety standards, both parties to the negotiations have made it very clear that TTIP will not result in lowering consumer protection standards. The European Commission has been very vocal that there will be no changes in the EU policies or standards regarding food safety. The Commission has also taken numerous opportunities to set out EU red lines in the negotiations, for example concerning hormones in beef, GMO legislation etc.

Specifically in relation to antimicrobial treatments of meat or carcasses, EU legislation allows for the approval of such treatments, provided that they are considered safe by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and used under strict conditions, while fully respecting the

stringent hygiene requirements that Union legislation requires to be applied all along the food chain process.

No antimicrobial treatments will be approved in the EU unless there is a clear scientific assessment confirming that they are beneficial for consumers (i.e. no safety risks and reduction of microbial contamination). The EU will not accept the use of antimicrobial treatments as a replacement for hygiene practices but only as an additional tool to enhance the safety of the final product.

Whilst the Commission is leading discussions with US authorities, the EP and the EU Council of Ministers will be kept fully informed on developments.

Conclusion

The Commission will continue to negotiate the TTIP with the US, on the basis of the mandate given by the European Council in June 2013. The Commission reiterated that negotiations will not result in any lowering of food safety standards. Throughout this process, the Commission will keep the European Parliament and Member States informed of progress.