

Tougher food inspections from farm to fork

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Press release

Plans to tighten up official food inspections, from farm to fork, were adopted by Parliament on Wednesday. The new rules, already informally agreed by MEPs and the Council, aims to improve food traceability, combat fraud and restore consumer trust in the integrity of the food chain.

The legislation will provide a comprehensive, integrated and more effective control system in the areas of food and feed safety rules, veterinary and plant health requirements, organic production and protected geographical indication rules.

“After the horse meat scandal, consumers had serious questions about the traceability of food, and the integrity of the meat supply chain. The European Parliament strove to address these concerns and to end up with a text that allows competent authorities to effectively combat fraudulent practices” said rapporteur Karin Kadenbach (S&D, AT).

“I am also proud that Parliament managed to have the chapter on enforcement strengthened, in particular regarding the penalties to be applied in the event of intentional violations of the rules. I trust that really deterrent penalties will be a key tool to combat fraud in every area” she added.

The agreement negotiated between MEPs and the Council of Ministers provides for:

- a comprehensive scope, encompassing the whole agri-food chain: controls on food, feed, plant health, pesticides, animal welfare, geographical indications, organic farming,
- unannounced, risk-based controls in all sectors,
- better enforcement against fraudulent or deceptive practices,
- import conditions for animals and products imported from third countries, and
- European Commission controls in EU member states and in third countries.

Note to editors

Recent food fraud scandals, such as the horsemeat scandal, have shown the need for more effective action on the part of enforcement authorities to protect consumers and honest operators alike, from the risks which may arise from breaches of the rules along the food chain.

The new rules will follow a risk-based approach, thus allowing competent authorities to focus their resources on the more relevant issues (all risks considered and not only risks for health).

In order to establish a harmonised general framework, the proposal for a regulation encompasses, in a single regulatory text, the official controls relating to all sectors of the agri-food chain (currently split among 16 or so regulations or directives). The proposal provides an in-depth review of existing provisions, aiming to eliminate any regulatory overlapping and taking a proportional and flexible approach so as to be able to react more

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promptly to emergency situations, by, for example, establishing swifter procedures for the accreditation of official laboratories.

Procedure: Ordinary legislative procedure, second reading agreement

Further information

- Steps of the procedure:
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2013/0140\(COD\)&l=en](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2013/0140(COD)&l=en)
- EP rapporteur Karin Kadenbach (S&D, AT): <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/97014.html>
- Adopted text (2013/0140(COD)) will soon be available here (15.03.2017):
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/texts-adopted.html>
- Video recording of debate (click on 14.03.2017): <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/plenary/search-by-date>
- Video of the press conference (if applicable) : <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/other-events/schedule>
- EbS+ (14.03.2017) :
<http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/ebs/schedule.cfm?sitelang=en&page=3&institution=0&date=03/14/2017>
- EP Research: Fighting food fraud:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/bibliotheque/briefing/2014/130679/LDM_BRI%282014%29130679_REV1_EN.pdf
- Audiovisual material for professionals: <http://audiovisual.europarl.europa.eu/food-safety>

Political groups

- Press release by the EPP group: <http://bit.ly/2nrJ2LR>
- Press release by the S&D group: <http://bit.ly/2nmyyka>
- News pages of the ECR group: <http://bit.ly/1Y0YFrj>
- News pages of the ALDE group: <http://bit.ly/2ikk6qK>
- News pages of the GUE/NGL group: <http://bit.ly/1UrAIM9>
- News pages of the Greens/EFA group: <http://bit.ly/2m6JiBA>
- News pages of the EFDD group: <http://bit.ly/1TUnDFU>
- News pages of the ENF group: <http://bit.ly/2cxzxcR>

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