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Answer given by Mr Hansen
on behalf of the European Commission
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In the past 60 years, including during COVID-19 and the ongoing war in Ukraine, food supply and food security in the EU have never been at risk. A series of well-functioning instruments embedded in the EU policy framework¹ have ensured the resilience and self-sufficiency of the food system. The European Food Security Crisis preparedness and response Mechanism (EFSCM)² and the Internal Market Emergency and Resilience Act (IMERA)³ further strengthen the structure in place. The EU is one of the largest global food producers and a net exporter of food. This strong production base underpins EU food security. China's situation is significantly different from the EU's.

As a complement to production and trade, stocks can play a role in mitigating food shortages. There is an ongoing effort to collect stocks data for cereals, oilseeds, oilseed products and rice, together with Member States, in accordance with rules introduced in 2022⁴. There must be a high level of certainty on quality and completeness of the data before publication. The data do not cover national strategic stocks that some Member States have.

The EFSCM included this topic in its work programme 2025 to assess and discuss potential needs. This approach is equally in line with recent recommendations in the Niinistö report⁵. Both, the outcome of the discussions in the EFSCM, the recommendations of the report and the costs and benefits of (perishable) food stocks will feed into the upcoming Preparedness Union Strategy.

¹ The Common Agricultural Policy, the Common Fisheries Policy, the Single Market and others.

² https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/agri-food-supply-chain/ensuring-global-food-supply-and-food-security_en#european-food-security-crisis-preparedness-and-response-mechanism-efscm.

³ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/single-market/internal-market-emergency-and-resilience-act_en.

⁴ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/791 of 19 May 2022 amending Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/1185 as regards the notification of levels of stocks of cereals, oilseeds and rice.

⁵ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/5bb2881f-9e29-42f2-8b77-8739b19d047c_en?filename=2024_Niinisto-report_Book_VF.pdf