

**Question for written answer E-003272/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)

Subject: Bankruptcies among poultry farmers due to European rules

Poultry producers in the EU have to comply with legislation on environmental protection, animal welfare and food safety. This legislation has led to a substantial rise in the cost of producing poultry meat in the EU. At the same time the EU is negotiating with other countries or groups of countries to liberalise the trade in agricultural products. A report by the Agricultural University of Wageningen¹ shows that in 2011, on the basis of the present import duties, Argentina and Brazil were already able to undercut EU producers' prices for chicken fillets. As import duties are cut still further, Thailand, Ukraine, the USA and Russia will also be able to offer chicken fillets for less than EU producers' prices. These countries do not need to comply with anything like all the EU legislation on environmental protection, animal welfare and food safety, etc. In the past the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV) has asked questions about this kind of sophistry, particularly as regards the egg sector², to many of which the Commission has not replied³.

1. Is the Commission aware of the report entitled 'Competitiveness of the EU poultry meat sector'?
2. Does the Commission deny the report's finding that non-EU countries have much less strict legislation on the environment, animal welfare and food safety?
3. Can the Commission explain to poultry farmers, and the general public, why it adopts all sorts of wide-ranging legislation for poultry farmers and then ensures that they are competed out of existence by allowing imports from third countries where much less store is set by matters such as animal welfare and food safety?
4. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that it knowingly allows the products of other countries' cruelty to animals into the EU, while putting the European poultry farming sector out of business by the strict rules it has to comply with?
5. In its answer to the earlier questions, the Commission states that the rules reflect the balance struck between animal welfare and the interests of the economic sector concerned. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that what is actually happening is that cruelty to animals is imported while jobs are exported, and thus there is no balance at all? If not, why not?

¹ <http://www.avec-poultry.eu/system/files/archive/new-structure/avec/Communication/Study%20final%20version.pdf>

² <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-009572+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en>

³ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-009572&language=EN>