

**Question for written answer E-002977/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Increase in beef imports into the EU

A DG AGRI report on the beef market published on 23 April 2020 contains data on beef imports from Mercosur countries. According to the statistics, beef imports in March 2020 were some 60% higher than in March 2019. Figures from the report show that the market situation of farmers in the EU, rendered critical by the COVID-19 pandemic, was further aggravated by the increase in imports.

This is clear proof of a link between the import of beef from Mercosur countries and the current situation of the EU beef market. Importing food into a saturated market destabilises that market and will cause long-term damage to agriculture in the EU, especially as outlets in the gastronomy and tourism sectors have come to an almost complete standstill.

1. How does the Commission explain the unusual increase in imports in March 2020 as compared to a year previously?
2. What action will the Commission take to ensure that there are no such unusual increases in imports in the future?
3. Why has Article 194 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 not been applied, despite the current difficult market situation and the increase in the amount of beef imported from Mercosur countries in March 2020? What circumstances will cause the Commission to apply this protective measure?