

EN
E-006235/2020
Answer given by Ms Kyriakides
on behalf of the European Commission
(8.2.2021)

The Commission is aware of the report referred to by the Honourable Members. The responsibility to implement EU animal welfare legislation lies with the Member States. The Commission is entitled to intervene if it appears that they consistently and systematically fail to comply with their obligations in this regard, and it will consider acting if there is enough evidence in that respect.

In 2017, the Commission audited Spain on pig welfare in farms¹ as part of the project to avoid routine tail docking. The audit also covered minimum welfare standards on farm management, pig health, hygiene, air quality and enforcement. On the basis of the outcome, the Commission issued six recommendations, which are still being followed-up. The audit report is publicly available on the Commission's website².

In a letter sent to the Spanish competent authorities in May 2020 about the Farm to Fork strategy, the Commission pointed out the importance of the proper implementation and enforcement of EU law on the critical area of animal welfare. The Commission recommendations to Spain in view of their strategic plan for the Common Agricultural Policy³ also identifies concerns with respect to animal welfare in Spain, mostly in the pig sector, and highlight the importance of improving it by promoting and supporting best practices, knowledge and investments.

¹ DG(SANTE) 2017-6126: Audit carried out in Spain from 18 September 2017 to 22 September 2017 in order to evaluate Member State activities to prevent tail-biting and routine tail-docking of pigs

² https://ec.europa.eu/food/audits-analysis/audit_reports/index.cfm

³ https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/food-farming-fisheries/key_policies/documents/cap-strategic-plans-c2020-846-swd-es_en.pdf