

**Question for oral answer O-000025/2017
to the Commission**

Rule 128

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on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

Subject: Fraudulent Practices in the Brazilian Meat Sector

Operation Carne Fraca – a two year investigation launched by the Brazilian Federal Police into two of Brazil's largest meat processing companies (JBS & BRF) throughout seven key beef-producing Brazilian states – has raised huge concerns. The investigation revealed serious fraud and corruption in the sector, which is putting potentially dangerous and fraudulent products into the food chain and European consumers at risk.

Investigators have reported that federal inspectors were paid to ignore the adulteration or expiration of processed foods. Sanitary permits and export certificates were also falsified. Furthermore, the investigation revealed that chemicals were used to improve the appearance and smell of expired meats and cheaper products were blended with meats. Reports that meat contaminated with salmonella was exported to Europe and that ascorbic acid was used to mask the appearance of spoiled meat are of serious concern to European consumers.

Brazil is the world's largest exporter of beef and poultry combined. It is the EU's largest meat supplier, exporting hundreds of thousands of tonnes of beef and chicken to the EU every year. European producers and consumers have an expectation that all meat imports meet the high European food quality standards.

1. Can the Commission provide details on the imports of these tainted products into the EU, specifying the volume of products under suspicion and the European markets to which they were sold?
2. Why did European controls not discover this systemic fraud involving adulterated meat entering the EU market? What advice will the Commission give to Member States in strengthening controls in the aftermath of these revelations?
3. Given that this scandal raises food safety concerns, how will these revelations impact ongoing trade negotiations with Mercosur countries? Is it now time to review the negotiations and remove meat from the trade negotiation agenda?

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Forwarded: 28.3.2017

Deadline for reply: 4.4.2017