

WRITTEN QUESTION P-6311/07
by Anne Ferreira (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Evaluation of the ban on imports of chlorine-treated poultry from the US

In the context of the Transatlantic Economic Council and its work on reducing the obstacles to trade between the EU and the US, the Commission has undertaken to examine the trade dispute concerning imports from the US of chlorine-treated poultry (a procedure known as 'blanching'). This subject involves public health issues and is giving rise to considerable anxiety.

The opposition of the Veterinary Committee to the use of chemical baths for disinfecting poultry is a clear signal which must be taken note of if we are to deal with the issue of chlorine-treated poultry. The Commission needs to examine the matter with a view to prioritising a production model based on controls across the entire chain, rather than only monitoring at the chain's end.

Would the above decision not be contrary to the precautionary principle and to the need for a sustainable and safe food industry? In other words, should chlorine-treated poultry intended for human consumption not be looked at more closely, given that certain studies have shown that the way such poultry is treated is at the root of numerous widespread illnesses, including heart disease, thrombosis, sterility, impotence, etc?

Are there any urgent reasons justifying a decision to authorise such a method?