



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Health and Food Safety Directorate General

sante.ddg2.g.5(2022)2354081

Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed

Section *General Food Law*

09 March 2022

CIRCABC Link: <https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/294f68b1-d493-4e0d-b83a-05505c6dc9b6>

SUMMARY REPORT

A.01 French national measure under Article 54 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 suspending the introduction, import and placing on the market in France of meat and meat products from animals coming from third countries that have received antimicrobial medicinal products to promote growth or increase yield (notified to the European Commission and Member States on 25 February 2022).

On 25 February 2022, France notified to the Commission and Member States an interim protective national measure suspending the introduction, import and placing on the market in France of meat and meat products from animals coming from third countries that have received antimicrobial medicinal products to promote growth or increase yield, on the basis of Article 54 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 on general food law (the General Food Law (GFL) Regulation) providing for national emergency measures.

In accordance with the procedure set out in Article 54 of the GFL Regulation, the Commission brought the matter before the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed – PAFF Committee (GFL section) for an exchange of views.

France presented its national emergency measure by underlying that antimicrobial resistance is a global public health problem and a major concern for France. It justified it by the absence, by 28 January 2022, of Union measures under Article 118 of Regulation (EU) 2019/6 on veterinary medicinal products (VMP Regulation) to prohibit the imports into the EU of animals and products of animals that have received antimicrobial medicinal products promoting growth or antimicrobial reserved for the treatment of certain human infections; and, the urgent need to tackle antimicrobial resistance. The French measure prohibits the placing on the market of meat products that have received antimicrobials for growth promotion and increase yield for a period of one year. Operators are required to exercise due diligence in that respect. According to the French Authorities, the purpose of this measure was to allow for the partial application of Article 118 of the VMP Regulation as regards imports of meat and meat products into the French market.

The presentation was followed by an exchange of views.

A number of Member States tabled the following comments/questions:

- Preference to be given to a harmonised European approach over national approaches;
- expected difficulties to defend WTO aspects;
- questioned whether AMR constitutes an emergency situation (questioning the legal basis invoked);
- enforcement aspects and the role of national competent authorities of other Member States.

France welcomed the efforts by the Commission to ensure implementation of Article 118 of the VMP Regulation and indicated its preference for harmonised measures. However, France considered that it could no longer wait for the EU measures regarding imports given also societal expectations and, hence action was taken at national level. The French measure would remain in place until the adoption of Union measures.

France also clarified that it would be for operators to transmit the required information; where meat and meat products are imported into France from other Member States, the business operators in those other Member States should also request assurances from their suppliers in third countries. No official controls by other Member States competent authorities were expected. The French authorities will do random checks whether the necessary attestations exist.

The Commission stressed that the fight against antimicrobial resistance was a key priority and it remained fully committed in ensuring appropriate implementation. Despite certain delays, a lot of work – and significant work – to implement Article 118 of the VMP Regulation was underway. It accordingly presented the progress made to date for the preparation of the necessary implementing and delegated acts. It concluded that it would be more efficient to focus efforts on an ambitious common Union approach.

M.01 The crisis situation in Ukraine and the consequences of the lack of some raw materials/ingredients for the labelling and the food safety.

The point was added on the agenda upon the request of one Member State. In light of the expected shortages of certain food commodities that are normally imported into the EU from Ukraine (e.g. maize, wheat and especially sunflower oil), food business operators are concerned how to ensure compliance with EU requirements when they seek for alternatives, e.g. by replacing sunflower oil by another vegetable oil, product labels would need to be adapted accordingly.

Several Member States called for flexibility and alternative means for ensuring consumer information. More specifically, they called the Commission to ensure the coordination of the decisions taken in the different fora as regards the consequences of the war in Ukraine for the food chain.