

**Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification
Systems (23rd Session)**

Mexico City, Mexico, 1-5 May 2017

European Union comments on

Agenda Item 8:

**Discussion paper on regulatory approaches to third party certification in
food safety**

(CX/FICS 17/23/8)

*Mixed Competence
European Union Vote*

The European Union and its Member States (EUMS) would like to thank Canada and the United Kingdom for preparing a comprehensive and informative paper on third party certification.

Competent authorities in different countries are increasingly considering third party certification as an option to assist in delivering official controls. In the EU the recently adopted new Regulation on official controls recognises the role that third party certification schemes can play in the prioritisation of official controls. The new Regulation maintains the risk based approach to controls and clarifies that Member States' competent authorities when planning their controls need to take into account, amongst other things, the reliability and results of the operator's own checks performed by the operator or by a third party at the operator's request, as is the case with third party certification schemes.

In view of these developments the EUMS consider it timely to develop Codex guidance on how and under which conditions competent authorities could make use of third party certification schemes in their national food control systems. Harmonised international guidance would also prevent potential barriers to trade.

The EUMS therefore support starting new work on third party certification as proposed in the project document attached to document CX/FICS 17/23/8.