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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: AOB item for the meeting of the “Agriculture and Fisheries” Council
on 26 January 2026:
Marketing Standards for poultry meat
- *Information from Germany, supported by Denmark, Latvia, Poland and Slovakia*

With its letter of 6 October 2025, the European Commission presented a draft Commission delegated regulation (EU) .../... supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards marketing standards for poultry meat, and repealing Commission Regulation (EC) No 543/2008, to the Council. The main regulatory contents refer among other things to Optional Reserved Terms and the water content of poultry meat.

Germany, Denmark, Latvia, Poland and Slovakia are committed to bringing the marketing standards for poultry meat in line with current consumer expectations and the latest scientific research. To this end, the marketing standards should be liberalised to the extent that they allow for indications that sufficiently account for the labelling approach now in use in multiple EU member states as well as the information needs of consumers: The ban on labelling outdoor husbandry types in another way hinders the evolution of outdoor husbandry systems, which many consumers are in favour of. Therefore, further flexibilisation and sufficiently comprehensible requirements allowing for correct implementation and control are needed for the labelling of meat from poultry kept in outdoor husbandry systems.

The provisions on maximum water content limits tabled by the European Commission in its most recent delegated regulation are based on outdated scientific foundations. Hence, they fail to take account of the changes in the marketplace brought about in particular by breeding. As a result, there is already a surplus of poultry meat batches on the market with water contents that exceed the proposed limits. There is an urgent need to revise the methods for determining the water content and the corresponding limits.

Greater simplification and requirements based on actual market developments are needed in order to ensure the smooth functioning of the poultry meat market and promote animal welfare. This is why Germany, Denmark, Latvia, Poland and Slovakia are calling on the European Commission to pursue the improvement of marketing standards in a timely manner in order to fully reflect real developments in the poultry meat sector.
