



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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"I/A" ITEM NOTE

from: Working Party on Financial Agricultural Questions (AGRIFIN)
on: 6 May 2011
to: Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1) / Council

Subject: Special Report No 14/2010 from the European Court of Auditors entitled "The Commission's management of the system of veterinary checks for meat imports following the 2004 hygiene legislation reforms"
- Adoption of Council conclusions

1. On 30 March 2011, the Working Party on Financial Agricultural Questions (AGRIFIN) examined Special Report No 14/2010 from the European Court of Auditors entitled "The Commission's management of the system of veterinary checks for meat imports following the 2004 hygiene legislation reforms" as well as the Commission's reply to the Court's report (doc. 7968/11).
2. On 6 May 2011, the Working Party discussed draft Council conclusions on the Special Report (doc. 9108/11).
3. After the meeting on 6 May 2011 and in the light of these discussions, the Presidency drew up the final version of the draft Council conclusions, which the General Secretariat of the Council then circulated and which all delegations were able to accept.

4. In accordance with the Council conclusions of 8 May 2000 on improving the examination of special reports drawn up by the Court of Auditors, the Working Party on Financial Agricultural Questions (AGRIFIN) invites the Permanent Representatives Committee to suggest to the Council that it adopt the draft Council conclusions as set out in the Annex to this note as an "A" item at a forthcoming session.
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DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS

**on Special Report No 14/2010 from the European Court of Auditors entitled
"The Commission's management of the system of veterinary checks for meat imports
following the 2004 hygiene legislation reforms"**

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- (1) WELCOMES Special Report No 14/2010 from the European Court of Auditors, entitled "The Commission's management of the system of veterinary checks for meat imports following the 2004 hygiene legislation reforms";
- (2) RECOGNISES that the current system of controls has contributed to the absence over the past 15 years of any major health crisis in the EU resulting from shortcomings in the performance of import veterinary checks;
- (3) HIGHLIGHTS the fact that the obligation to conduct veterinary checks on meat imports is enshrined in EU legislation, while the Rapid Alert System for Feed and Food (RASFF), the Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES), the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) inspection mission reports and other information from third countries serve as tools essential in ensuring an effective assessment of risks and thus form a solid basis to determine the level of physical checks applicable;
- (4) In this context, NOTES that TRACES is a relatively new tool, that every effort has been made to ensure that it is used in every Member State in a uniform manner and that the implementation is now almost complete in all Member States;

- (5) ENCOURAGES the Commission to take forward the design, development and implementation of appropriate responses to threats to food safety and to harmonise and to enhance the degree of coherence of import control legislation. As a means to achieve these objectives, it ENCOURAGES the Commission to continue the development of TRACES and RASFF and their utilities and to improve the coordination with the Member States in this regard;
- (6) RECALLS the Council Conclusions of 18 and 19 December 2008 on the safety of imported agricultural and agri-food products and compliance with Community rules¹, and the Council Conclusions on the international competitiveness of the European agri-food model². In this context, it WELCOMES the Commission's report to the European Parliament and the Council on the effectiveness and consistency of sanitary and phytosanitary controls on imports of food, feed, animals and plants³;
- (7) INVITES the Commission to continue the promotion of European standards, in compliance with the SPS agreement, in the field of animal health, plant health and food safety, especially in negotiations for bilateral agreements with third countries and in international organisations (Codex Alimentarius, OIE, IPPC).
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¹ 17169/08 ADD 1.

² 11409/10 ADD 1.

³ 18251/10.