

EU trade facilitation for Ukraine

(22/01) In the previous EPEGA Newsletter, we had informed about the publication of Regulation (EU) 2024/1392. This means that the customs moratorium on Ukrainian agricultural products was extended for another year on 6 June 2024.

According to the EU Commission, the figures for triggering the automatic protective measures provided for in the regulation for the egg and poultry sector are as follows:

	Eggs	Poultry
Quota quantities according to Implementing Regulation 2020/761	6 000,00 t	90 000,00 t
Imports recorded between 1.7.2021 and 31.12.2023	57 972,40 t	342 607,00 t
Arithmetic mean of imports between 1.7.2021 and 31.12.2023	23 188,96 t	137 042,80 t
Five twelfths (5/12) of arithmetic mean	9 662,07 t	57 101,17 t

As reported, the following safeguard measures apply to the egg and poultry sectors in accordance with Article 4(7) and (8) of this Regulation:

If, **during the period 6 June to 31 December 2024**, cumulative import volumes since 1 January 2024 reach the respective arithmetic mean of import volumes recorded in the period from 1 July to 31 December 2021, in 2022 and in 2023, the Commission shall, within 14 days

- a) reintroduce for that product until 31 December 2024; and
- b) introduce from 1 January 2025 either a tariff-rate quota equal to five twelfths of that arithmetic mean or the corresponding tariff-rate quota whichever is higher.

If, **during the period 1 January to 5 June 2025**, cumulative import volumes for the period since 1 January 2025 reach five twelfths of the respective arithmetic mean of import volumes recorded in the period from 1 July to 31 December 2021, in 2022 and in 2023, the Commission shall, within 14 days and after informing the Committee on Safeguards, reintroduce for that product the corresponding tariff-rate quota.

If the Commission imposes a measure which reintroduces a tariff-rate quota suspended, the quantity imported during the calendar year the Commission imposes that measure shall be taken into account in the management of that tariff-rate quota.

Regulation (EU) 2024/1392 is available at the following link: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1392/oj>

Current situation on the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza

(21/02)

Public consultations on the planned amendment to Regulation 2020/760 as regards the proof of reference quantities for poultry meat from Ukraine

(22/02) In EPEGA Newsletter No. 17 on 2 May, we informed our members about the draft amendment to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/760 submitted by the EU Commission in connection with the effects of the temporary measures (ATMs) to liberalise trade with Ukraine. According to this draft, paragraphs 6 and 7 of Article 9 are to be amended to the effect that the erga omnes quotas for the three quota groups with the possibility of cumulation can no longer be used to establish reference quantities in the groups concerned.

The EU Commission has launched a public consultation on this planned change for a period of 4 weeks. Under the following link, which contains further information on this procedure, all interested parties can submit their opinion on this proposal by 3 July 2024:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14070-Tariff-quotas-amended-rules-on-reference-quantity-requirement_en

Amendment to the lists of third countries for imports of poultry commodities from Australia and the United States

(22/03) Annexes V and XIV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404 as regards the entries for Australia and the United States in the lists of third countries authorised for the entry into the Union of consignments of poultry, germinal products of poultry, and fresh meat and meat products from poultry and game birds has been amended again in relation to highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). The corresponding Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1621 has been published in the Official Journal L on 3 June 2024.

Australia has notified the Commission of two outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in poultry in the state of Victoria, which were confirmed on 22 May and 24 May 2024.

The **United States** have notified the Commission of six outbreaks of HPAI in poultry in the states of Idaho (1) and Minnesota (5), which were confirmed between 20 and 21 May 2024.

With the implementing regulation that has now been published, the EU Commission has suspended the entry into the Union of consignments of poultry, germinal products of poultry, and fresh meat of poultry and game birds from those areas mentioned in Australia and the United States.

Annexes V and XIV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404 were amended accordingly to take account of the current epidemiological situation as regards HPAI in Australia and the United States. Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1621 entered into force on 4 June 2024 and is available at the following link: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/1621/oj

Current situation on African swine fever

(22/04) An outbreak of African swine fever (ASF) is suspected on a pig farm in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Germany. After pigs with high fever were detected on the farm in the district of Vorpommern-Greifswald on 5 June, the State Office for Agriculture, Food Safety and Fisheries examined initial samples. PCR testing revealed the suspicion that animals had been infected with the African swine fever pathogen. Samples have been forwarded to the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut to confirm the results.

On 6 June, Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1661 laying down specific control measures for African swine fever (ASF) and amending Annex I to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 was published in the Official Journal L. Previously, there had been new outbreaks of ASF in wild porcine animals in **Czechia** and **Poland**. In addition, the epidemiological situation in certain zones listed as restricted zones I

and II in **Czechia** in Annex I to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 has improved as regards wild porcine animals, due to the disease control measures being applied by that Member State in accordance with Union legislation. Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1661 is available at the following link: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/1661/oj

France introduces voluntary origin labelling for ingredients

(22/05) In France, consumers will be able to be better informed about the origin of ingredients in processed foods. On 25 May, the Paris Ministry of Economy officially launched the new "Origin'Info" label. In the future, food manufacturers will be able to show the country of origin of the most important ingredients and the place of processing on a voluntary basis. Either a label on the packaging, electronic displays on the shelf or a QR code can be used for this purpose.

According to the ministry, the introduction of the labelling is to take place gradually. In the best case, it should be found on more than 10,000 products by the end of the year. Numerous large retailers, including Casino, Carrefour, Leclerc and Intermarché, have already confirmed their participation. Many food manufacturers are also participating, such as Bonduelle and Fleury Michon.

AFC Report 2024: Bashing the food industry

(22/06) The constant criticism of the agricultural and food industry does not stop. For the 15th time, the Risk & Crisis Consult (AFC) in Germany is examining the frequency of critical topics and trends - last year, critical reports about the industry were reported an average of six times a day. This particularly damages the reputation of companies' brands and the image of the food industry. Negative headlines that confront companies with allegations of greenwashing, animal cruelty or even the abuse of human rights dominate the media world. Bashing increasingly uses a narrative that negatively influences the perception and opinion of a broad public. The AFC justifies the increasing number of negative reports with emotional discussions about political decisions.

In the "AFC Issue Monitor Report 2024, AFC recorded a total of 2,203 critical publications from 2023. With headlines such as "Torture for the refrigerator shelf" or "Increasingly brazen consumer deception through promises of alleged climate neutrality" the industry was reported critically on an average of six times a day. According to the AFC analysis, the top 5 topics "Animal Welfare & Animal Husbandry", "Politics & Laws", "Consumers & Transparency", "Environment & Climate" and "Research & Development" alone accounted for almost two thirds of all issues.

The trend towards negative reports about actual or alleged grievances in livestock farming obviously continues unabated. The critical reporting on keeping conditions, animal transport and animal health and the associated legal regulations has led to public criticism on the subject of animal welfare and animal husbandry being at the forefront with 20% of all reports. Close behind, with 19% of the issues, are critical publications on the political debate about planned or already passed laws such as B. Supply Chain Due Diligence Act, Deforestation Ordinance or Animal Husbandry Labeling Act. According to the evaluation, around a tenth of all negative reports relate to consumer deception and a lack of transparency from companies along the value chain.

Overall, it can be seen that well-intentioned actions by associations and companies help to raise awareness among the general public about particularly critical issues in the agricultural and food industry. In order to protect the image of an entire industry and the own reputation of companies and brands, economic operators must therefore comprehensively deal with potential allegations.

EFSA publishes safety assessment on food enzymes

(22/07) The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published the following opinion on the safety assessment of food enzymes:

Safety evaluation of the food enzyme carboxypeptidase D from the genetically modified *Aspergillus oryzae* strain NZYM-MK

The food enzyme carboxypeptidase (EC 3.4.16.1) is produced with the genetically modified *Aspergillus oryzae* strain and is intended for use in the following food manufacturing processes: Processing of cereals and other grains for the production of bakery and brewing products, processing of meat and fish products for the production of protein hydrolysates, processing of plant and fungal products for the production of protein hydrolysates, and processing of yeast and yeast products.

Based on the data provided, the Panel concluded that this food enzyme does not give rise to safety concerns under the intended conditions of use.

Audit report Hungary

(22/08) The Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety carried out an audit in Hungary from 13 to 28 November as part of the Directorate-General (DG) for Health and Food Safety work programme. The objective of this audit was to verify the application of EU measures for the control of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) during the outbreaks in poultry that occurred in the 2021/22 and 2022/23 HPAI epidemics.. The report now published describes the outcome of this audit.

The report highlights a failure by Hungarian authorities to address crucial weaknesses in their animal health emergency system which were previously identified in a 2020 Commission audit, including issues such as inadequate poultry registration, incomplete risk assessment, inadequate surveillance in wild birds, delays in disease confirmation, incomplete epidemiological inquiries, lack of trained staff, insufficient depopulation capacity and compromised animal welfare during depopulation.

Despite analysis by the competent authorities and poultry industry to understand the factors contributing to HPAI introduction and spread in previous epidemics, the improvement actions were either not implemented, in an early stage of implementation or proved ineffective.

Hungary has not reduced poultry establishment density in areas previously problematic during epidemics. The rapid spread of HPAI in these areas overwhelmed veterinary services, hindering timely control measures. Deficiencies in daily biosecurity operations and in responding to initial outbreaks, facilitated the spread of the infection. Delays in disease confirmation and animal culling further exacerbated the situation. The authorities regained control only through additional measures, such as extending restricted zones, preventive killing and depopulation of some of the affected areas.

The report contains recommendations to the Hungarian competent authorities aimed at enhancing the implementation of control measures. It is available at the following link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/food/audits-analysis/audit-report/details/4762>

Amending Lists of Establishments

(22/09) The European Commission has changed the lists of establishments approved for delivery to the EU for the game and poultry sector for the following third countries:

Meat from poultry and lagomorphs: Israel, Norway, Ukraine, United Kingdom

Meat products: Brazil, China, Norway, Thailand, USA, United Kingdom

Minced meat, meat preparations, MSM: Norway, Thailand, USA, United Kingdom

Meat from farmed game: Norway, USA, United Kingdom

Wild game meat: Norway, United Kingdom

The current lists of establishments can be found on the website of the EU Commission under the following link:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/tracesnt/directory/listing/establishment/publication/index#!/search>

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