

WRITTEN CONTRIBUTION

Point 5 sheep & goat - Implementation of the Regulation (EC) n0. 1069/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers with regard to the indication of the country of origin for meat used as ingredient (implementing rules applicable to the sheep sector in case sheep meat is used as an ingredient

Report on origin labelling of meat as an ingredient

The Commission published on 17 December 2013 its report on the possible extension of mandatory origin labelling for meat (of all types) used as an ingredient. It set out in a neutral and objective manner all relevant facts, in order to launch an informed discussion with the EP and the Council. It established that despite a strong consumer interest in origin labelling for meat ingredients (90% of consumers), the consumer's 'willingness to pay the cost of such information' is weak. Moreover, mandatory origin labelling would pose operational challenges and require adaptations in the food chain depending on the nature of the meat ingredient(s) concerned and the applicable modalities.

Council: The report has been discussed in the AGRI Council of 24 March 2014. Member States were divided as regards next steps and the different scenarios addressed into the report.

European Parliament: On 11 February 2015, the EP adopted a resolution calling the Commission to table a legislative proposal making the indication of the origin of meat in processed foods mandatory. The Commission has taken note of the EP's resolution. However, given its duty to ensure a process of evidence-based decision making, it considered that mandatory origin labelling for meat used as an ingredient did not appear to be an appropriate way forward, taking into account the consumers' limited willingness to pay for such information, the considerable administrative burden this would imply, and more generally, the far-reaching impacts that this may have, including on EU competitiveness and trade, as set out in its report. The official reply of the Commission is to be transmitted to the EP by end of June 2015.