

**Question for written answer E-015189/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
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Subject: Applying EU animal welfare regulations to third-country livestock keepers

A comparison of various legal systems shows that the strictest animal welfare requirements in the world are currently in the EU, which means that the EU serves as an example in this area.

EU livestock keepers face a serious competitiveness problem because in many third world countries, livestock keepers have to comply with much less stringent requirements, which unfairly allows them to sell their products in the EU internal market at much lower prices.

We have to require the people who export animal products into the EU to keep animals during the production of the given product in accordance with requirements that are the equivalent of the EU regulations. In my opinion, since the equivalence requirement is not defined with sufficient precision, many livestock keepers can easily bypass compliance with these stringent regulations. It is for this reason that requirements matching EU regulations must also be stipulated in third world countries.

1. What, according to current practice, does the EU expect of negotiating partners in regard to animal welfare when conducting international free-trade negotiations?
2. How does the Commission plan to make compliance with equivalent animal welfare requirements more effective in third world countries?
3. What specific examples can the Commission give of import bans on certain third world country animal products owing to a violation of animal welfare regulations?