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Helena Jonsson  
President of Swedish Farmers  
Lantbrukarnas Ekonomi AB  
Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund  
105 33 Stockholm - Sweden

Dear Ms Jonsson,

Thank you for your letter of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016. First of all, we would like to reassure you that the three issues you raised are very well-known to us and are fully taken into account during the negotiations of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the United States.

We confirm that the Commission has no intention of lifting the EU ban on the use of hormones in animal production and on the import of meat products produced from hormone treated animals. We want to be clear that the hormone issue is not for negotiation in TTIP and that this ban will not be affected by TTIP or any other free trade agreements.

With respect to antibiotic use in agriculture, we are indeed convinced that the issue of anti-microbial resistance is not only a serious public health issue but relates also to food safety and trade. This is why we have proposed to establish in TTIP a cooperation mechanism on anti-microbial resistance. And this is why we are discussing this issue with the American counterpart at the Transatlantic Taskforce on Antimicrobial Resistance (TATFAR). One of our goals is of course a reduction of the use of antibiotics in agriculture production at global level. However, we believe that in the bilateral context with the US, better results might be achievable via the establishment of a cooperation mechanism which could help establishing standards for the rest of the world rather than seeking overly prescriptive rules in TTIP. Cooperation would in particular enable us to better address the issue of husbandry practices


on both sides of the Atlantic. Having said this, we remain open to exploring the feasibility in TTIP of more concrete commitments. It goes without saying that any cooperation provisions in TTIP would have to be without prejudice to the EU's ability to regulate the issue of anti-microbial resistance.

Turning to anti-microbial treatments (AMTs) in the meat industry, we would like to recall that such practices are not allowed in the EU, unless duly authorised by the Commission. Such authorisation would only be granted if the treatment (1) does not raise safety concerns and (2) contributes to improve food safety under current EU food hygiene practices. By no means could AMTs be used to circumvent our strict farm to fork hygiene policy. We can inform you that there is no pending application for the approval of the use of chlorine for microbial reduction in the EU. However, we have received an application for the use of peroxy acetic acid as poultry carcass decontaminant. While the European Food Safety Authority has concluded that the use of this product would not raise safety concerns for consumers, the Commission's services are still assessing whether the use of this product would contribute to improve food hygiene. This work has not been conclusive so far. In any event, we do not believe that labelling would be appropriate to address food hygiene practices and therefore we are not ready to consider it within or outside TTIP.

Finally, you raise the question of a possible trade-off between EU market access concessions and the protection of EU geographical indications in the US under TTIP. Geographical indications are a very important feature of EU agricultural and trade policies. They represent 30% of EU agriculture exports to the US and they belong to rural communities, farmers and companies, which in most cases are small farmers and small and medium enterprises. We believe it is therefore an EU-wide interest to take a strong and offensive stance on the protection of EU geographical indications. Of course this should not be done at the expense of farmers or regions who may have no or a limited interest in the use of geographical indications.

We thank you for your valuable input and hope you will find these elements useful.

Yours sincerely,

  
Cecilia Malmström  
Vytenis Andriukaitis  
Phil Hogan