

Spain fully supports the **F2F Strategy**, agrees with its objectives and follows it with a special interest being a large agricultural producer. Spain's main concerns relate to the need for impact assessments and the legal aspects. According to the Minister, farmers should be helped to understand how they can benefit from the F2F objectives instead of centrally imposing stricter measures on them. The Minister explained that Spain had already made significant progress in some areas highlighted in the Strategy (e.g. 9.6% of the agricultural land is under organic production) but admitted that improvements are necessary in several other areas. The Minister appreciates the good working relations between the ministry of agriculture and DG SANTE and hopes to build on this in the future.

Commissioner Kyriakides stressed that Spain is a key partner in achieving the Green Deal/F2F objectives. With regard to the risks linked to pesticides, recent indicators show encouraging results in Spain (e.g. in relation to the implementation of the sustainable use of pesticides directive (SUD) and the decreasing number of emergency authorisations) The Commissioner thanked Spain for its constructive approach during the discussions on the revision of the SUD in the Council. She explained that health and food safety is linked and should hence be looked at jointly. The current COVID crisis has also brought opportunities and - with the sensitivity of citizens now to the importance of health - these could be used to bring citizens on board to recognise the relevance of a wider approach.

The Minister explained that since his appointment in June 2018 the number of **emergency authorisations** decreased by half in Spain. He confirmed the importance of Green Deal/F2F objectives for Spain but underlined that the same standards should also be imposed on **imports**. He mentioned pesticides as an area where reciprocity with third country producers would be needed to ensure competitiveness of EU agriculture. The Minister explained that while Spain considers it important to have common F2F objectives, flexibility in application needs to be provided for the different MS and regions because of their individual characteristics. The Commissioner agreed on the importance of reciprocity in relation to trade.

Spain closely follows the latest developments on **African swine fever**, being the second biggest producer of pig meat in the EU. Spain fully supports measures taken by the Commission and other MS. The Minister stressed that more efforts are needed to make trade partners accept the EU zoning measures in order to limit the negative trade impact. The Commissioner underlined that African swine fever is a priority issue for the Commission. She recalled the Commission's efforts in reaching out to trade partners to promote the acceptance of the EU zoning measures.

In relation to **new genomic techniques**, the Minister asked for a practical and science-based approach. In his view, it is important to ensure legal clarity on the use of new genomic techniques. Spain is interested in progress on developing new techniques but safety must be ensured. The position of Spain is close to the NL position. The Commissioner agreed with the need for science-based decision on new genomic techniques and referred to the ongoing study (expected April 2021). She stressed that any future policy action will be based on the outcome of the study.

The Commissioner raised the issue of **front-of-pack nutrition (FOP) labelling** and informed the Minister that the Commission will launch an impact assessment on the different possible

options based on the available schemes already developed in the EU. She clarified that the Commission is in favour of a mandatory harmonised scheme and plans to present its proposal in the next two years. The Commissioner asked for Spain's support in this area (particularly given that the Nutri-Score scheme will be mandatory in Spain from 2021) and invited Spain's opinion on the need for any derogation or adjustment to known schemes. The Minister confirmed Spain's support to the Commission's position on front-of-pack nutrition labelling. In his view, a mandatory FOP labelling is the best way to provide clarity to citizens. The Minister explained that the Spanish government opted for a national scheme after several food groups started to organise their own schemes. The Minister offered support to the Commission on this file. In Spain, the Ministry dealing with Consumer Affairs is on lead on this file with the Ministry of Agriculture associated.

Both sides agreed to continue the constructive relationship on the different topics.

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