

Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development  
The Chair

.... 11.2025

Mr Bernd Lange  
Chair  
Committee on International Trade  
BRUSSELS

**Subject:** Opinion on the Proposal for a Regulation implementing the bilateral safeguard clause of the EU-Mercosur Partnership Agreement and the EU-Mercosur Interim Trade Agreement for agricultural products (COM(2025)0639 – C10-0247/2025 ....

Dear Chair,

Under the procedure referred to above, the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development has been asked to submit an opinion to your committee on the proposal for a Regulation. By written procedure launched on 24 November 2024, the AGRI coordinators decided that the Committee should issue its opinion in the form of a Chair's letter.

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development adopted this letter on 2 December 2025 and asks the Committee on International Trade, as the responsible committee, to take the following points into account when preparing its report on the proposed Regulation.

AGRI Committee:

1. Draws attention to the concerns expressed by European farmers regarding the potential market impact of increased imports from Mercosur countries, in particular for sensitive agricultural sectors such as beef, poultry, sugar, and certain fruits; stresses that significant differences in production costs, arising from lower environmental, animal welfare and labour protection requirements in Mercosur, risk creating unfair competitive pressure for EU producers operating under substantially higher standards;
2. Notes with concern that the safeguard mechanisms proposed by the Commission may not provide sufficiently rapid or effective protection, as volume-based triggers may be set too high, monitoring provisions lacking sufficient detail, and investigative procedures too lengthy to prevent serious market disruption once import surges occur;
3. Emphasises the ongoing risk of environmental and social dumping, including the use of pesticides or production methods banned or tightly restricted in the EU, persistent

deforestation, and structural labour-rights deficiencies. Underlines that this disparity puts at risk both the sustainability goals of the Common Agricultural Policy and the credibility of EU trade policy;

4. Stresses that the absence of binding and enforceable sustainability obligations in the agreement, combined with weak enforcement mechanisms, fails to guarantee compliance with EU climate, environmental, and social-standard expectations, placing EU producers at a systemic disadvantage;
5. Highlights farmers' concerns regarding inadequate traceability and transparency of imported agricultural products, particularly beef, limiting the EU's ability to verify origin, deforestation-free production, and conformity with applicable sanitary and sustainability requirements;
6. Warns that the cumulative impact of increased imports, insufficient safeguards and limited sustainability requirements may undermine EU food security, market resilience, and the socio-economic cohesion of rural areas, resulting in potential farm closures, job losses and long-term decline in of agricultural capacity within the Union;
7. Underlines that uncertainty around the functioning, thresholds and legal soundness of the safeguard clause creates serious planning challenges for farmers and agri-food operators, discouraging investment and increasing exposure to market volatility;
8. Notes that the introduction of products produced under lower or incomparable standards risks damaging consumer trust in EU food quality and safety, stressing that the integrity of EU standards must not be compromised by trade concessions;
9. Highlights that existing EU support measures are not perceived by farmers as sufficient to alleviate persistent structural challenges or to compensate for recurring market disruptions that may stem from the agreement;
10. Calls on the Commission to strengthen the proposed Regulation by lowering safeguard activation thresholds, shortening investigation timelines, enhancing product-specific monitoring, improving traceability requirements, and ensuring that sustainability non-compliance can trigger immediate and proportionate remedial measures;
11. Urges the Commission to guarantee full reciprocity of standards, including through enforceable sustainability provisions aligned with EU environmental, animal welfare, food-safety and labour requirements, so that EU farmers are not placed at a structural disadvantage;
12. Reiterates its support for an ambitious and rules-based EU trade policy, but stresses that such policy must protect the Union's agricultural interests, uphold the highest sustainability standards, and ensure a level playing field for European farmers and rural communities.

Yours sincerely,

Veronika VRECIKOVÁ

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