caroline-attwood

Press release | 12.09.2017

Better cooperation needed to stop further food scandals

Fipronil eggs scandal

Following a request from the Greens/EFA group, the European Parliament will hear Council and Commission Statements today on the Fipronil eggs scandal. You can follow the debate live from around 10.15am on the European Parliament website: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/plenary/video?date=12-09-2017

Food controls will only be effective if Member States provide the resources needed to implement them, says Green food safety spokesperson **Bart Staes**.

"EU governments have to take food controls much more seriously. Until Member States are prepared to dedicate the money and resources needed to keeping our food chain safe, scandals like this will continue to happen and people's health will be put at risk.

"But aside from resources, there needs to be better cooperation. Both the Netherlands and Belgium wasted precious time in notifying EU authorities (1). It is great that the EU has a "rapid alert system", but it will only work if Member States take fast and decisive action."

Background

The European Commission was informed on 20 July 2017 through the EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) that a service treatment company used illegal treatments against red mite on poultry farms. These illegal treatments contained the substance fipronil, a systemic pesticide that is prohibited in the EU for all food-producing animals. The affected poultry farms were mainly located in the Netherlands and Belgium but four farms in Germany and one farm in France are also concerned. Some 22 EU countries, two European Economic Area countries, and 10 countries outside the bloc received shipments of fipronil-laced food, according to the Commission spokesperson.

(1) Neither the Netherlands or Belgium, where most of the farms were blocked, notified RASFF quickly. For example, we know that the Belgian authorities were informed on 2 June 2017 that a laboratory control on 15 May detected a presence of 1,2 mg/kg of fipronil in eggs, while the maximum residue limit is 0,005 mg/kg. By mid-June they knew there was probably a link with the Netherlands. Nevertheless they waited until 20 July to put the file in the RASFF system and they only informed the responsible ministers on 24

July.

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