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[Press release](#) | 25.02.2013

Horsemeat scandal

EU response must be comprehensive and include fundamental reform of agri-food system

Ahead of today's council of EU agriculture ministers, who will discuss the ongoing horsemeat scandal, Green MEPs have set out their demands for EU-level action (1). The scandal has highlighted deficiencies with the procedures for verifying food quality, as well as shortcomings in EU legislation, notably on meat product labelling. The Greens/EFA group called on EU governments to take action to this end, as well as more fundamental reforms of our agri-food system, notably in the context of the ongoing CAP reform. Speaking at a press conference in the European Parliament, Green food quality spokesperson **Bart Staes** (MEP, Belgium) said: *"While there are immediate questions about applicable rules and responsibility for controls and ensuring compliance, this scandal raises wider questions. Tougher rules and stricter enforcement can reduce the scope for fraud and gaming but there are also more fundamental questions about the nature of our agriculture and food system, which are particularly relevant in the context of the ongoing reform of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy. This is true both of relevant cross-compliance rules on food quality, as well as overall measures aimed at promoting short-distance food supply chains, to reduce food quality risks. The EU Food and Veterinary Office (FVO), which monitors compliance with EU requirements and legislation, must be strengthened: notably its capacity for carrying out the necessary inspections to ensure compliance. The results of its work must be given proper political follow-up, with democratic scrutiny by the European Parliament and national parliaments, aimed at ensuring issues it raises are properly acted on and addressed."* Green MEP and vice-chair of the European Parliament environment, public health and food safety committee **Carl Schlyter** (Sweden) added: *"While compliance with existing EU rules on food quality and information needs to be improved, there are also clear deficiencies in EU legislation on food information and labelling, in particular, with regard to meat and meat products. The Commission must now come forward with proposals to revise EU legislation on food information to this end, as soon as possible after the current impact assessment. Notably, this means ambitious origin labelling for all meat and processed meat products and ingredients (including place of birth, rearing and slaughtering). Currently, origin labelling only exists for unprocessed, fresh beef, not for processed beef or any other meat."* (1) The Greens/EFA group submitted a paper listing their demands to EU agriculture ministers. Click to [view the paper](#) (pdf)

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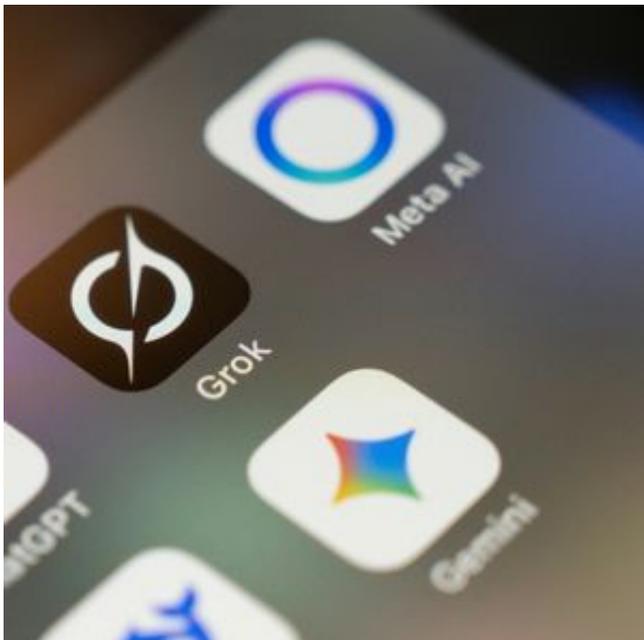


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Responsible MEPs



Bart Staes

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