



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

The Director-General

Brussels
SANTE/G5/KV/iv(2021) 5528089

Subject: Stop Cage Farming in Europe and via Imports

Dear Petitioner,

President von der Leyen asked me to thank you for your letter of 19 May 2021 (also addressed to Executive Vice-President Dombrovskis) and to reply on her behalf. Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying, which is due to the intention to take into account the Commission's reply to the European citizens' initiative (ECI) 'End of the Cage Age'.

In your letter you express your concerns about conditions for the keeping of farmed animals and products derived thereof in the EU. You call specifically to make sure that progress are also reflected in the EU trade policy.

The Commission adopted a Communication¹ in response to this ECI on 30 June 2021. In its Communication, the Commission sets out plans for a legislative proposal by 2023 to phase out cage systems for all animals mentioned in the ECI. To this end, the Commission will consider the available science, an assessment of social, economic and environmental impacts, evolving needs and consumer demand as well.

The Commission also acknowledges in its Communication that, since the EU is a major importer of food products, it bears a societal responsibility also with regard to the products it imports. This is why the Communication proposes specific measures in that regard.

In the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Commission committed to submit a proposal for a revision of the EU animal welfare legislation by 2023. The proposal aiming at the prohibition of cage farming systems will come as part of this revision of the animal welfare legislation. The Commission has already started the related preparatory work.

Yours sincerely,

[e-signed]

Sandra GALLINA

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.C..2021.274.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AC%3A2021%3A274%3ATOC>