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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Food sustainability, international relations
The Director

Brussels
SANTE.DDG2.D.3/CP/mh(2022)1736590

Dear Petitioners,

Thank you for bringing to our attention on 18 February 2022 the petition and the supporting documentation, in which you express your concerns regarding the welfare of mares bred and reared in Iceland for the purpose of the extraction of a hormone, Pregnant Mare's Serum Gonadotropin (PMSG), and the subsequent import into the EU.

Equine chorionic gonadotropin (eCG) is authorised as a veterinary medicinal product in a number of EU Member States and the Commission is not aware of any plans for such authorisation(s) to be revoked. The rules on the authorisation of veterinary medicinal products are set out in Regulation (EU) 2019/6 on veterinary medicinal products. That Regulation provides for procedures for both centrally and nationally authorised products.

Regarding the treatment of horses farmed for blood serum production, please note that the EU cannot impose all its animal welfare standards to non-EU countries. In this context, the Commission believes in enhancing dialogue and cooperation with non-EU countries to raise awareness of the importance of improving animal welfare. For this reason, the Commission has also addressed the importance of improving the welfare conditions of horses involved in the production of pregnant mare serum gonadotropin at multilateral level in the framework of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), and at bilateral level. These efforts will continue.

With regard to EEA legislation applicable in Iceland, please kindly note for Iceland the areas referred to in paragraph 2 of the Introductory Part of Chapter I of Annex I to the EEA Agreement. Complaints related to the application of the EEA legislation in Iceland falls under the competence of the EFTA Surveillance Authority and therefore any complaints should be addressed directly to the Authority. Should you wish to lodge a complaint, this should be sent to the Authority, by mail at the following address: EFTA Surveillance Authority, Rue Belliard 35, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium; or by email at registry@eftasurv.int.

I would like to take this occasion to thank you for your interest and commitment in animal welfare. Please be reassured that the Commission will continue promoting the development and implementation of animal welfare standards globally.

Yours sincerely,

Electronically signed

Nathalie CHAZE

c.c.: CAB President Von Der Leyen
CAB Commissioner S. Kyriakides