



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY
Crisis Preparedness in Food, Animals and Plants
The Director

Brussels
SANTE.G.3/MK/nc(2026) 9401847

Subject: Commission's commitment to animal welfare

Dear Sir/Madam,

The President of the European Commission, Mrs Ursula von der Leyen, asked me to thank you for your recent messages presenting a petition ⁽¹⁾ calling on the Commission to confirm, in the State of the Union address, its promises to carry out the revision of the animal welfare legislation and to end the use of cages, thus fulfilling its commitment following the European Citizens' Initiative "End the Cage Age".

I would like to reassure you that animal welfare is a key priority for this Commission, and we are committed to a comprehensive approach that ensures that the EU maintains high standards in this area.

Building on the Vision for Agriculture and Food, the recently published EU Livestock Strategy ⁽²⁾ provides a long-term roadmap to strengthen the resilience, competitiveness and sustainability of the sector but also to improve animal welfare standards.

By the end of 2026, the Commission intends to propose a targeted revision of animal welfare rules for laying hens and broilers, focusing on the phasing-out of cages, practical on-farm welfare indicators, ending the systematic killing of male chicks and introducing WTO-compliant equivalent import requirements.

By the second quarter of 2027, a similar proposal will address animal welfare rules for pig, including the transition from crates to pen systems.

I would like to thank you for your commitment to animal welfare.

Yours sincerely,

[e-signed]
Bernard Van Goethem

⁽¹⁾ Your e-mail refers to a "petition", which in the framework of EU Law is used for petitions addressed to the European Parliament pursuant to Article 227 TFEU. Your letter is dealt with by the Commission according to the rules for correspondence with citizens.

⁽²⁾ EU Livestock Strategy - Agriculture and rural development