

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Directorate G – Crisis management in food, animals and plants
Director

Brussels,
SANTE G2/MF/rb (2017) 7117193

Dear Petitioner,

Subject: your e-mail "Stop the importation of horse blood serum"

President Junker asked me to thank you for your letters regarding your call for a ban on the import of blood products produced with practices causing suffering to animals, and to reply on his behalf.

The Commission received information from animal welfare organisations suggesting possible mistreatment of horses farmed for blood serum production in certain South American countries.

The Commission has been liaising, within the remit of its competence, with the relevant services in the concerned South American countries in order to have a clear picture on the situation there, to raise awareness of the problem and to promote improvements where needed. Furthermore, the Commission has also been in contact with the relevant pharmaceutical industry to get more detailed information on the use of pregnant mare serum gonadotropin (PMSG) in the production of veterinary medicinal products intended for zootechnical and therapeutic uses in livestock. In addition, the Commission drew the attention of the Member States to the matter during the meeting of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed of 30 November 2016, and will continue raising awareness of this issue.

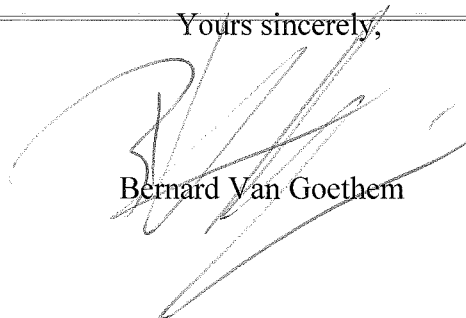
The Commission is seeking cooperation with non-EU countries to improve animal welfare globally. In this context, the Commission actively supports the adoption of international standards on animal welfare by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and their subsequent implementation by member countries. In particular, the OIE animal welfare standards "Use of animals in research and education"¹ cover mares kept for the purpose of producing a medicinal product and provide reference guidance to OIE member countries.

While the Commission will continue raising awareness on this issue among concerned stakeholders and Member States, it should however be noted that the EU cannot impose its animal welfare standards on non-EU countries. For imports into the EU, EU trade policy shall respect the rules of the World Trade Organization.

¹ http://www.oie.int/index.php?id=169&L=0&htmfile=chapitre_aw_research_education.htm

Please be reassured that the Commission will however continue promoting, within its
remit, the development and implementation of animal welfare standards globally.

Yours sincerely,



Bernard Van Goethem