

**DIOXIN CONTAMINATION OF CERTAIN ANIMAL PRODUCTS INTENDED  
FOR HUMAN OR ANIMAL CONSUMPTION**

Supplementary Information from the European Communities

Addendum

*In April 2000, nearly a year after the beginning of the Belgian dioxin crisis, all remaining restrictions on Belgian products were lifted following detailed investigation and analysis of the various products. Any possible contaminated products have been destroyed.*

1. On 18 April 2000 the European Commission adopted Commission Decision 2000/301/EC, repealing Commission Decision 1999/788/EC of 3 December 1999 as amended by Commission Decision 2000/150/EC of 22 February 2000 and lifting the remaining protective measures in force related to the Belgian dioxin contamination which occurred in January 1999. The Decision was adopted following unanimous favourable vote in the Standing Veterinary Committee and published in the Official Journal of the European Communities n° L 97 of 19 April 2000.
2. The Decision signals the end of EC restrictions on Belgian products in relation to the Belgian dioxin crisis. All products previously under restriction according to the various Commission Decisions adopted since June 1999 to protect public and animal health within the European Communities and in third countries may now circulate freely within the European Communities and be exported to third countries, without any additional certification.
3. The Decision to lift the last restrictions was taken after the Belgian authorities informed the European Commission that the identification and investigation of all the stocks of products still under restriction, i.e. products derived from pigs and poultry slaughtered before 20 September 1999, had been completed. All products found to be contaminated as a result of the investigation have been placed under restriction and are in the process of being destroyed.
4. Copies of Commission Decision 2000/301/EC (available in all EC languages) can be obtained from the EC SPS Enquiry Point, or on the EUR-Lex site (<http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex>).
5. Since the contamination was reported to the Commission in late May 1999, the European Commission has introduced a total of 12 Decisions to safeguard public and animal health within the European Communities and in third countries, adjusting the measures as scientific investigation gradually unveiled the extent of the contamination.
6. Throughout the dioxin crisis, the European Communities has consistently applied the principles of precaution and transparency in its actions. The measures have been gradually relaxed only after intensive scientific investigation, including an extensive programme for testing and certification in the various sectors, applying the strict levels set by the European Communities for dioxin- and PCB-tolerance.

7. Third countries have been informed of the implications of EC action through information notes G/SPS/GEN/123 and Add. 1-3 issued through the SPS Secretariat, and through the statements made by the European Communities to the SPS Committee in July 1999 and in March 2000. In addition, a series of information meetings to which all third country missions in Brussels were invited have been held by the European Commission in Brussels, and information notes have been sent to all third country missions in Brussels whenever new information allowed for a revision of the protective measures.

8. In general, third countries, including WTO Members, have adjusted their protective measures according to the Decisions adopted by the European Communities.

9. The European Communities remains concerned, however, that a number of third countries including WTO Members, continue to apply import restrictions related to the contamination that seriously disrupt trade with EC member States. Some WTO Members have notified such restrictions, while other Members have applied restrictions without notifying them to the WTO.

10. In WTO Document G/SPS/GEN/123/Add.3, published on 9 March 2000, a list of notifications to which the European Communities has sent written comments to seek clarification in accordance with Article 5.8 of the SPS Agreement was included. The enclosed list contains the notifications to which the European Communities sent comments to which no reply has yet been received.

Notification	Date of issue	Measure	Date EC Comments
G/SPS/N/COL/28 EM Colombia	20 October 1999	Suspension of imports from <b>Belgium, France, Germany and the Netherlands</b> of pigs, poultry and derived products, which represent a risk of dioxin contamination.	31 January 2000
G/SPS/N/HUN/6 EM Hungary	8 July 1999	Ban on food products of animal origin and animal feed from <b>France, Germany and the Netherlands.</b>	31 January 2000
G/SPS/N/PRY/1 EM Paraguay	19 August 1999	Import restrictions on animals and animal products from <b>Belgium, France and the Netherlands.</b>	31 January 2000

11. In the light of the ample information made available as regards the background of the lifting of the safeguard measures, the European Communities considers any import restrictions related to the dioxin contamination unjustified and calls upon Members to adjust their measures to the latest Commission Decision.