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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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## EU HEAT TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS ON MEAT

### COMMUNICATION FROM THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The following communication, received on 11 April 2014, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of the Russian Federation.

1. In 2010, the Rosselkhoznadzor requested to be authorized to export processed poultry meat products and raw bovine, pork and poultry meat preparations produced in the Kaliningrad region to the European Union. In addition, Russia requested revised criteria for heat treatment of finished beef and pork products. In accordance with Decision 2007/777/EC, the deliveries of finished products obtained from pigs, cattle and small ruminants were approved from the whole territory of the Russian Federation but subject to heat treatment at the temperature of at least 80°C.
2. Following the 2010 FVO mission in the Kaliningrad region, as well as taking into account the guaranties provided by the Rosselkhoznadzor which is the Russian national competent authority, on 7 December 2012, Commission Regulation No. 1162/2012 defined the Kaliningrad region as a separate part (from the veterinary point of view) of the Russian Federation due to its geographical location. The abovementioned Regulation authorized the importation of meat products obtained from cattle, pigs and small ruminants as well as treated stomachs, bladders and intestines from the Kaliningrad region into the European Union, but only those that were subjected to the required treatment (which is specified in Part 2 of Annex II of Decision 2007/777/EC), i.e. at the temperature of at least 80°C. The European Union explained this kind of treatment by the FMD and ASF unfavourable situation in the Russian Federation.
3. As for the rest of the Russian Federation, these meat products are permitted only to be transited through the territory of the European Union.
4. Actually these activities resulted in the exclusion of the Russian Federation from the list of the third countries eligible to export finished meat products into the European Union and this right was maintained only for the Kaliningrad region and provided that treatment temperature is at least 80°C.
5. It is worth noting that Annex III of Decision 2002/99/EC established heat treatment temperatures and treatment exposure time to eliminate certain animal health risks for meat and milk. Thus, product core temperature of at least 70°C was considered sufficient to eliminate FMD associated risks.
6. As for the ASF risks, the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code does not envisage such strict heat treatment conditions. Therefore the temperature of at least 80°C demanded by the European Union is disproportionate and unjustified for the treatment of pork products.
7. By letter of 18 March 2013, the Rosselkhoznadzor requested the European Union to revise the heat treatment regime for meat products, treated stomachs, bladders and intestines obtained from domestic cattle and farmed wild cloven-hoofed animals (except pigs), as well as domestic sheep and goats; to establish the minimum core temperature of 70°C for heat treatment of such products (regime D); and restore the right to export from the mainland of the Russian Federation to the EU member States.

8. In response, the EC General Directorate decided to soften the conditions for the temperature treatment regime for the abovementioned products from the Kaliningrad region to 70°C, but at the same time set a mandatory exposure time of heat treatment of 30 minutes, that corresponds to regime D1 heat treatment conditions instead of the requested regime D.

9. For the mainland of the Russian Federation (except for the Kaliningrad region), the European Union stuck to the previously taken decision not to resume imports.

10. On 7 November 2013, the Rosselkhoznadzor again sent a letter to DG SANCO, with a request to restore the right to export meat products, treated stomachs, bladders and intestines obtained from domestic cattle and wild farmed cloven-hoofed animals (except pigs), and also domestic sheep and goats, which specified the minimum core temperature of 70°C for heat treatment according to regime D. The response to this letter has not yet been received by the Rosselkhoznadzor.

11. During technical consultations between the experts of the European Union and the FGBI "ARRIAH", FGBI "VGNKI", as well as representatives of the Rosselkhoznadzor, held on 7 March 2014 in the city of Vladimir, Russia asked the European Union to provide a scientific justification for the treatment regimes of finished meat products aimed to eliminate animal health risks of ASF in pork.

12. In response, the representatives of the European Union explained that as the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code does not envisage special procedures for the destruction of the ASF virus in meat, the European Union made a decision to apply the procedures for the destruction of the virus recommended by EU legislation for classical swine fever and other viral diseases, i.e. 80°C. This contradicts the provisions of the OIE Code, which defines minimum core temperature of 70°C (regime D) to be sufficient to inactivate classical swine fever virus.

13. The European Union promised to send an official response to the Rosselkhoznadzor as soon as possible.

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