



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
 DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Deputy Director General, in charge of Directorates A, B and C

Brussels,
 LB/sn/agri.ddg1.b.4(2018)4115657

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank for your letter of 30th May 2018 and the attached letter of 18 May 2018 containing the legal analysis of the Advocate [REDACTED] addressed to [REDACTED], [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (our reference: Ares(2018)2843552), asking for a clarification on the use of boar taint vaccination in organic production of male pigs. Please accept my apologies for the late reply.

The Commission's services are of the opinion that the use of boar taint vaccination is not compatible with organic certification under the current rules laid down in Regulation (EC) No 834/2007¹ and Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008². This situation will continue in the future under Regulation (EU) 2018/848.

This interpretation was confirmed during the discussions between the co-legislators in the context of the negotiations preceding the adoption and the publication of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007³. Indeed, in 2015, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the Commission proposal for a Regulation on organic production and labelling of organic products⁴ where some amendments were tabled in relation to immunocastration aiming to authorise immunological prevention of boar taint as an alternative to the surgical castration of piglets in organic production.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1531234359184&uri=CELEX:02007R0834-20130701>

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1531234398750&uri=CELEX:02008R0889-20180101>

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1531234323587&uri=CELEX:32018R0848>

⁴ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A8-2015-0311&format=XML&language=EN>

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The co-legislators however did not retain such amendments in the final version of the Regulation (EU) 2018/848, confirming therefore the interpretation of the Commission that the use of boar taint vaccination is not in line with EU rules on organic production.

I would like to point out that in the context of the 2017 budget, the European Parliament proposed a pilot project entitled "Establishment of a harmonised internal market for pig meat obtained from pigs that have not been surgically castrated". The Commission has started in 2018 to implement the project.

The purpose of the pilot project is to encourage the production, use, marketing and acceptance of meat from uncastrated pigs or from immunocastrated pigs through the establishment of good practices and their dissemination among the different players of the food chain.

The present opinion is provided on the basis of the facts as set out in your letter of the 30th of May 2018, and expresses the view of the Commission services and does not commit the European Commission. In the event of a dispute involving Union law it is, under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, ultimately for the European Court of Justice to provide a definitive interpretation of the applicable Union law.

Yours sincerely,



María de los Ángeles
BENÍTEZ SALAS