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Vote in European Parliament environment committee to beef up EU's food control system

A major update of the EU's food control systems was passed in a vote today by the European Parliament Environment committee.

Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumer Organisation commented:

"A year after the 'horsegate' crisis, food scandals continue to shake consumer confidence. Strong EU actions are needed. For one thing we need higher penalties for food businesses who break the rules. These penalties should at least counter the gains made from cheating.

"Unannounced inspections, especially where the risk of fraud is higher, must increase. Food controls should be carried out by independent bodies. Leaving controls to industry or slaughterhouse staff is like letting a fox guard the henhouse.

"Plans to restore consumer confidence are currently being considered and have received the support of MEPs. With elections closing in this law deserves the full attention of lawmakers to push it through before the end of this Parliament's mandate."

For BEUC, the following aspects are key to the improvement of Europe's control system:

- Guaranteeing the independence of those in charge of controls;
- Ensuring food authorities have adequate resources to carry out controls;
- Publishing the results of controls, thereby providing consumers with information on where to eat out, shop or decide which products to buy;
- Increasing unannounced inspections and tackling food fraud, especially for food where risk to consumers is high.

Note:

The European Parliament also adopted a resolution on the cloning of animals for food. Please find BEUC's reaction [here](#).

Today, the Competitiveness Council debated the UK's voluntary nutrition labelling scheme. We sent a [letter](#) to President Barroso and Permanent Representations in support of this scheme.

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