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EU parliament moves forward on food fraud

Food chain fraud such as the recent series of scandals of horsemeat found in processed beef products has been tackled in a European Parliament vote today¹.

A report led by Dutch MEP Esther De Lange outlines a range of measures such as substantial financial penalties, obligatory country of origin labelling and more unannounced inspections.

Camille Perrin, Senior Food Policy Officer at BEUC, commented:

“The European Parliament has overwhelmingly endorsed the approach European consumers have been calling for so that food fraud can be nipped in the bud. Consumers’ confidence in their food needs to be restored as distrust of the food chain is detrimental to both consumers and the industry.

“Strong EU counter measures are vital as another fraud case was uncovered last month in France where horsemeat unfit for human consumption entered the food chain². Lessons from last year’s horsemeat scandals were not learnt as some fraudsters are still willing to take risks for easy money.

“We strongly support these plans to introduce higher penalties, obligatory origin labelling and more unannounced controls to check food is not only safe, but also what it says it is. The adoption of this report augurs well for the upcoming debate on food inspections in the EU³. We urge the European Parliament to keep up the good work.”

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Note to editors:

For more information on BEUC’s position see our paper ‘EU proposal for a review of Official Controls – BEUC comments’, June 2013: <http://bit.ly/120DNEn>

¹ [Report](#) on ‘The food crisis, fraud in the food chain and the control thereof’ by Esther De Lange MEP. See pp. 14-15

² See article from [Bloomberg](#), Dec 2013

³ The ENVI Committee of the European Parliament will vote on Official Controls next January 30th. The text aims to strengthen inspections standards both in terms of food safety and authenticity.