

Att: Mr. Janusz Wojciechowski,
 EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development
 Rue de la Loi 200
 1049 Bruxelles
 Belgique

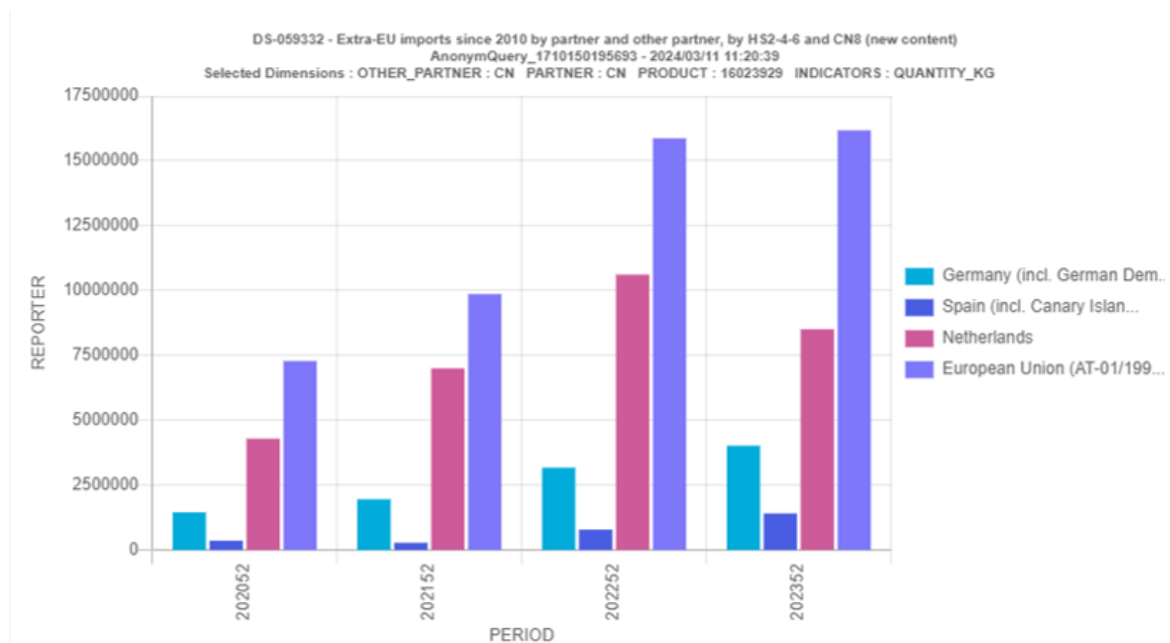
04 April 2024

Dear Commissioner Wojciechowski,

On behalf of AVEC, representing the EU poultry meat producers, and Copa Cogeca, representing the EU farmers and their cooperatives, we would like to convey the urgent call for help from the entire roast and grilled duck sector in Europe, which is facing devastating imports of Peking duck from China.

At a recent meeting with your services, we demonstrated that our producers are unable to compete with imports from China, which reach the EU at prices far below EU production costs. Our members have realised that Chinese producers can bring ducks to the EU market at 40% lower production costs, which has resulted in a large proportion of these imports now coming out of quota, with full duty paid.

While China benefits from trade preferences to export ducks under a quota of 6000 tonnes for tariff heading 1602 39 29 and 600 tonnes under tariff heading 1602 39 85 (preferential tariffs of 10.9% in both cases), we have observed imports reaching more than double these volumes in 2023, as you can see in the graph below.



Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/comext/newtweb/submitresultsextraction.do>

In addition, we observe a similar increase in Chinese duck exports to the UK, a traditional market for EU roast duck exports, with imports rising from 2864 tonnes in 2021 to 4236 tonnes in 2023. This certainly adds to the difficulties faced by EU producers which are being outcompeted in one of their key export markets.

It seems obvious that the external quota duty of €276.5/100kg is no longer sufficient to protect our producers. In fact, our producers have estimated that the import volumes from China represent 15 to 20 million ducks that are no longer produced in the EU, compared to a total EU production of around 100 million roast and grilled ducks (please note that the production of roast and grilled ducks is not the same as ducks for foie gras production).

If these imports are not stopped, the production of roast ducks in the EU is threatened with bankruptcy in the short to medium term.

In a letter to AVEC dated 16 February 2024, following a meeting from an AVEC delegation with DG AGRI, the Commission indicates that is not willing to increase the import duty as this “would require thorough negotiations with all parties concerned”, leaving us with no solution.

Whilst we understand the complexity of these negotiations, we would like to reiterate that the EU authorities must seek a solution to ensure adequate protection for EU duck producers.

Otherwise, the future of all farmers, slaughterhouses, processors and workers who depend on this sector will be at stake and the EU will become completely dependent on Chinese duck imports.

In addition, our members have serious concerns about the sanitary conditions in China. There are a number of practices, such as the use of cages or the use of antibiotics as growth promoters, that lead to unfair competition.

Furthermore, the lack of transparency of the Chinese authorities in dealing with highly pathogenic avian influenza is very worrying, even though China only exports cooked products to the EU.


We therefore call on DG SANTE to conduct a new audit focusing on duck poultry establishments exporting to the EU (the last audit conducted by Grange in China dates back to June 2017 ...).

Last but not least, all EU countries that want to export poultry meat to China are either confronted with unjustified export bans (no compliant with WOH rules) or with burdensome and non-transparent procedures to get registered in China.

There is a serious lack of reciprocity and the EU Commission should be much more assertive towards Chinese duck imports when our exporters experience so many trade barriers to send their products to China.

We hope that you will understand the urgency of the situation and thank you in advance on behalf of the entire European duck producers for considering our demands. We remain available to discuss the issue with you and your team to find the best solution.

Kind regards.



Birthe Steenberg
Secretary General AVEC



Patrick Pagani
Deputy Secretary General COPA COGECA

CC: A similar letter will be sent to Trade Commission Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis