EU Food and Veterinary Audits Programme 2027

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EU presents 2027 audit programme for food safety and plant/animal health

European Commission: Food and Veterinary Audits Programme 2027

Update

The European Commission conducts regular audits and remote assessments of European Union (EU) Member States and non-EU countries to ensure the highest standards of food safety and regulatory compliance of goods put on the EU market.

This AGRINFO report highlights audits planned for 2027 in non-EU countries: Albania, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Ecuador, Fiji, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nicaragua, North Macedonia, Paraguay, Peru, South Africa, Suriname, Tanzania, Thailand, Türkiye, Uganda, Ukraine, Venezuela, Viet Nam, and Zambia.

A few additional countries may be added due to changing circumstances such as emerging risks or crises, new political priorities, or security issues.

Note that audits for non-EU countries not covered by the scope of the AGRINFO programme are not covered in this report.

The 2027 programme

The European Commission performs audits and remote assessments ("controls") of EU Member States and non-EU countries to ensure they have official control systems in place to guarantee that food put on the EU market meets its rules on food safety and plant/animal health.

For 2027, the European Commission plans 144 controls for the agri-food chain worldwide, of which some 55% will be conducted in non-EU countries wishing to export, or already exporting, to the EU. Among these, 58 controls will take place on the ground, and eight audits are planned for border control posts in EU Member States. Twelve further audits will be conducted in countries that are candidates to join the EU. In addition, about 30 desk-based (remote) assessments of residue control plans will be carried out.

The proportion of controls in non-EU countries is increasing. This reflects the EU Vision for Agriculture and Food 2025–2029 and the EU's commitment to increase the number of audits of non-EU countries and EU border control posts (European Commission 2025).

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Audits

Planned audits of non-EU countries by sector and topic are listed in Table 1. For planned audits of EU candidate countries, see Table 2.

Further audits are planned in the areas of animal health (one audit of a non-EU country), food safety in animal products (two audits of non-EU countries), and plant health (two audits of non-EU candidates looking to join the EU), with the countries to be audited still to be decided.

How are audits conducted?

An audit typically involves two auditors, who send pre-audit questionnaires to the competent authorities and analyse the responses. The audit team then meets with national, regional, and local authorities, and carries out visits to relevant sites to see how the controls are implemented. After each audit the European Commission issues a report which may include recommendations to the competent authority to address any systemic or significant non-compliances that have been identified.

Remote assessments

About 30 remote (desk-based) assessments are planned on residues of pharmacologically active substances in food of animal origin. All residue control plans of non-EU countries must be checked at least once every 5 years. A new 5-year cycle starts in 2026.

How are remote assessments conducted?

Remote assessments, based on comprehensive questionnaires, check that official controls carried out by the competent authorities of selected non-EU countries are appropriate to verify the compliance of exported animals and foods with EU requirements. They also check whether the authorities reliably certify compliance with those requirements when signing official certificates.

Why?

Control systems in EU Member States, and in non-EU countries, are continually monitored to guarantee effective enforcement of EU food safety and plant and animal health requirements.

Timeline

This AGRINFO report highlights the audits and remote assessments planned for 2027.

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What are the major implications for exporting countries?

A negative outcome of an audit or remote assessment performed by the European Commission in a non-EU country may result in the imposition of trade-restrictive measures. This is to protect European consumers and/or animal and plant health, as well as to encourage the authorities and food business operators concerned to take action and implement any necessary corrective measures quickly. Examples of trade-restrictive measures include increased checks at EU borders and, as a last resort, suspension of imports. The Commission reviews such measures periodically.

Recommended Actions

EU audits are greatly facilitated when exporting countries provide comprehensive responses to questionnaires (including for remote assessments), and when they prepare for an audit with detailed and organised records. This involves documenting all procedures, controls, and corrective actions that are taken to align with EU requirements. EU auditors require accessible evidence of system improvements, training logs, health and safety checks, and traceability systems. Conducting regular internal reviews and updating compliance strategies helps to demonstrate ongoing adherence to EU requirements.

Background

The Official Controls Regulation (2017/625, Art. 120) allows the European Commission to perform audits and remote assessments in non-EU countries. These audits and assessments allow the EU to check the systems in place in non-EU countries that are exporting food, feed, animals, and plants to the EU. They are also central to deciding if a non-EU country can be included in the list of countries permitted to export animals and animal products to the EU. The Commission targets countries according to the level of risk associated with their exports, taking into consideration the volume of exports, non-compliant consignments identified at EU points of entry, and higher levels of risk associated with particular types of food, feed, animals, or plants.

These audits are also opportunities to foster international cooperation, share best practices, and encourage continuous improvement in global food safety standards.

Resources

European Commission (2025) Commission announces reinforcement of controls on products imported into the EU. Press release, 9 December.

Online resources from the European Commission:

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Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products […] (Official Controls Regulation)

Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 on protective measures against pests of plants (Plant Health Law)

Regulation (EU) 2016/429 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health (Animal Health Law)

Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety (General Food Law)

Sources

European Commission: Food and Veterinary Audits Programme 2027

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Tables & Figures

Table 1: Audits of non-EU countries planned for 2027

	Scope			
Country	Food safety	Antimicrobial resistance	Animal health	Plant health
Argentina	Residues and contaminants (animals and animal products; aflatoxins in peanuts); plant products (notably berries); meat (poultry)			
Bolivia	Irradiation			
Brazil	Residues and contaminants (pesticides in fruit and vegetables); meat (poultry)			
China	Plant products; irradiation			
Ecuador	Fishery products (tuna); residues and contaminants (pesticides in fruit and vegetables)			
Fiji	Fishery products			
Guatemala	Fishery products			
Honduras	Residues and contaminants (animals and animal products)			
India	Residues and contaminants (animals and animal products; pesticides in fruit and vegetables)			
Indonesia	Fishery products; residues and contaminants (animals and animal products)			

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	Scope			
Morocco	Residues and contaminants (pesticides in fruit and vegetables)	Veterinary medicinal products (prohibition of use)		Plants and plant products
Namibia	Fishery products; residues and contaminants (animals and animal products); meat (beef)		Bovine (foot and mouth disease)	
Nicaragua	Residues and contaminants (animals and animal products)			
North Macedonia			Poultry (meat)	
Paraguay	Plant products (notably sesame seeds)			
Peru	Residues and contaminants (pesticides in fruit and vegetables)			Plant products (bacterial wilt in ginger)
South Africa	Fishery products (highly and ultra-processed); food contact materials (from recycled plastic)			
Suriname	Fishery products			
Tanzania	Fishery products			
Thailand	Live bivalve molluscs; meat (poultry)	Veterinary medicinal products (prohibition of use)		Plant products (bacterial wilt; curcuma and ginger)
Türkiye	Live bivalve molluscs			
Uganda	Fishery products			
Venezuela	Fishery products			
Viet Nam	Fishery products (highly and ultra-processed); plant products (notably black pepper)		Animal by-products: feed of insect origin	
Zambia				Planting material (quality of seeds)

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Source: European Commission: Food and Veterinary Audits Programme 2027

Table 2: Audits of EU candidate countries planned for 2027 (EU enlargement)

	Scope				
Country	Food safety	Plant protection (sustainable use of pesticides; residues)	Animal health	Plant health	Import controls (live animals, plants and their products)
Albania	X		+ Animal welfare and animal by-products		X
Moldova				X	X
Montenegro	X	X	X		X
Ukraine		X			

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