Rules on prohibited antimicrobials in imported animal products

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Regulation 2023/905 as regards the application of the prohibition of use of certain antimicrobial medicinal products in animals or products of animal origin exported from third countries into the Union

What is changing and why?

Resistance to antimicrobial medicines (or antibiotics) is viewed as a major threat to global health. The EU seeks to ensure prudent and responsible use of antimicrobials in animals. Rules that were already in place for animals reared in the EU are now extended to imported animals and animal products:

- certain antimicrobials that are used to treat humans must not be used in food-producing animals (Regulation 2022/1255)
- antimicrobials cannot be used either as growth promoters or to increase yield (Regulation 2019/6).

From **3 September 2026**, non-EU countries wishing to export animals or animal products to the EU will need to be on the list of authorised exporting countries recognised as meeting EU requirements, and their competent authorities must certify that each consignment of animal products exported to the EU meets those requirements.

Actions

Each country must decide what actions are needed to comply with Regulation 2023/905, i.e. to put in place a system that can guarantee prohibited antimicrobials are not used in goods exported to the EU market during the whole lifetime of the animals. This will involve working with people in the livestock and animal products industry, and possibly creating new national laws for mirroring the EU ban or updating control systems so that food producing animals intended to be used for producing food for the EU market are segregated.

Special attention is needed for products with long production times, such as beef, casings, and processed items. To export these to the EU after 3 September 2026, the required guarantees must cover the animals' entire lifetime. For example, this could mean starting the process at least 2 years before exporting.

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Timeline

The new rules apply from **3 September 2026**.

For more information see the full record on the AGRINFO website – where you can also view the latest AGRINFO Update newsletters and search the database.

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