



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Christophe Hansen
Commissioner for Agriculture and Food

Brussels, 29. 08. 2025

Dear Honourable Member,

Thank you for your letter of 22 July 2025 in which you inform the Commission of the difficulties that Greece is facing with the sheep pox and goat pox (SGP) outbreaks and ask for a coordinated a quick response.

Measures implemented by Greece against SGP like culling of animals, compensation to owners for the value of the animals culled, disinfections of holdings, etc. are eligible for EU co-funding, at a maximum rate of 30% through the Single Market Programme (Regulation (EU) 2021/690). EU financial support is also provided for the surveillance and early detection of exotic diseases, including SGP, in high-risk areas, through the Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) co-financed programmes (Greece and Bulgaria) and the T.H.R.A.C.E. programme (Trans-boundary High Risk Area Coordinated Epidemio-surveillance - in place since 2013) in Greece, Bulgaria and Türkiye.

Preventive measures can be supported through CAP Strategic Plans, including risk management, and improved on-farm biosecurity investments. CAP Strategic Plans can also support economic mitigation efforts through the restoration of agricultural potential on infected farms or farms suffering from the impact of a preventive destruction of animals.

In addition, in December 2024, a new measure (M23) was introduced under 2014-2022 Rural Development programmes, offering a possibility to further assist farmers, paying liquidity support to farms suffering a 30% loss of production or potential, including in the case of animal diseases.

It is up to the Member States to decide if they will use this new support possibility under their Rural Development Programs 2014-2022.

In addition, where included in Member States's CAP Strategic Plans, support can be provided to prevent and mitigate the economic impacts of animal diseases. Based on identified needs and an intervention strategy, support can be provided for risk management, improving on-farm biosecurity and investments to restore agricultural potential.

Mr Sakis Arnaoutoglou
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Investing in prevention is needed more than ever, as limited EU budget resources are unlikely to be enough to compensate all costs and losses linked to diseases.

EU state aid rules offer several possibilities to compensate farmers through schemes to support farmers in the prevention, control and eradication of animal diseases and to compensate affected farmers. The Agricultural Block Exemption Regulation that establishes in its Article 26 the conditions to grant aid for the costs of the prevention, control and eradication of animal diseases and aid to make good the damage caused by animal diseases or plant pests. Besides, the Agricultural de minimis Regulation has been revised to allow Member States to provide small amounts of support to farmers (up to EUR 50 000 per beneficiary and over three years) in a quick and flexible manner.

In relation to support measures under the CMO regulation ⁽¹⁾, the Commission may take exceptional support measures, financed by the agricultural reserve, to take account of restrictions on intra-Union and third-country trade, which may result from the application of measures for combating the spread of diseases in animals or the spread of plant pests. Those measures would cover market losses incurred by farmers located in an area put under movement restriction by veterinary measures, but not on an infected farm.

Such support measures are by nature limited in time, for the duration strictly necessary to support the market concerned. In that respect, it would require a clear start and end of the episode, and all losses specifically documented before the Commission can design a measure and propose it for the opinion of the Member States.

Rest assured that the Commission is closely monitoring the evolution of the situation and stands ready to help, within the boundaries of available resources and legal framework.

Yours sincerely,



Christophe Hansen

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) No 922/72, (EEC) No 234/79, (EC) No 1037/2001 and (EC) No 1234/2007. OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 671-854 ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/1308/oj>