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Food hygiene in the EU and import conditions

These slides accompany the explanation of the acquis to Albania and North Macedonia and can only be used for that purpose. Their content is subject to further development of the acquis and interpretation by the Court of Justice of the European Union

Unit DDG2 G4 Food Hygiene,
DG Health and Food Safety (SANTE)
European Commission

Overview of presentation

- The European Commission / SANTE (Health and Food Safety DG)
- Food safety risk assessment and setting rules at EU level
- Import conditions/Controls

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The European Commission / SANTE (Health & Food Safety DG)

Health and Consumers

Examples of EU Policies (Directorate Generals of the European Commission (EC))

- AGRI: Agriculture and rural development
- CLIMA: Climate action
- EMPL: Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
- GROW: Enterprise and Industry
- ENV: Environment
- ESTAT: Eurostat
- MARE: Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
- RTD: Research and Innovation
- SANTE: Health and Food Safety

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SANTE

PUBLIC HEALTH

- Control of aids, influenza, other infectious diseases,
- Healthcare systems including control of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in humans
- Tobacco control
- Medicinal products

FOOD SAFETY

- Policy units
- International affairs units (bilateral contacts, Codex …)
- Auditing and analysis (EU inspectors)

Food Safety: EU risk management competences (policy units)

Contaminants	Additives	Nutrition	Hygiene	Animal health	Feed
Residues	Contact materials	Food complements	Training	Animal welfare	Plant health
Pesticides	Flavourings	Labelling	Official Controls	Animal-by products	GMOs

My unit (SANTE G4)

- **Food Hygiene** Regulations (EC) No 852/2004, 853/2004 and 854/2004
- Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 on control of ***Salmonella*** and other specified food-borne diseases
- Directive 2003/99/EC on **zoonoses monitoring and reporting**
- Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 on control of **transmissible spongiform encephalopathies**
- Foodborne **outbreak** management
- Directive 1999/2/EC on **food irradiation**
- **Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)** (veterinary aspects and coordination)

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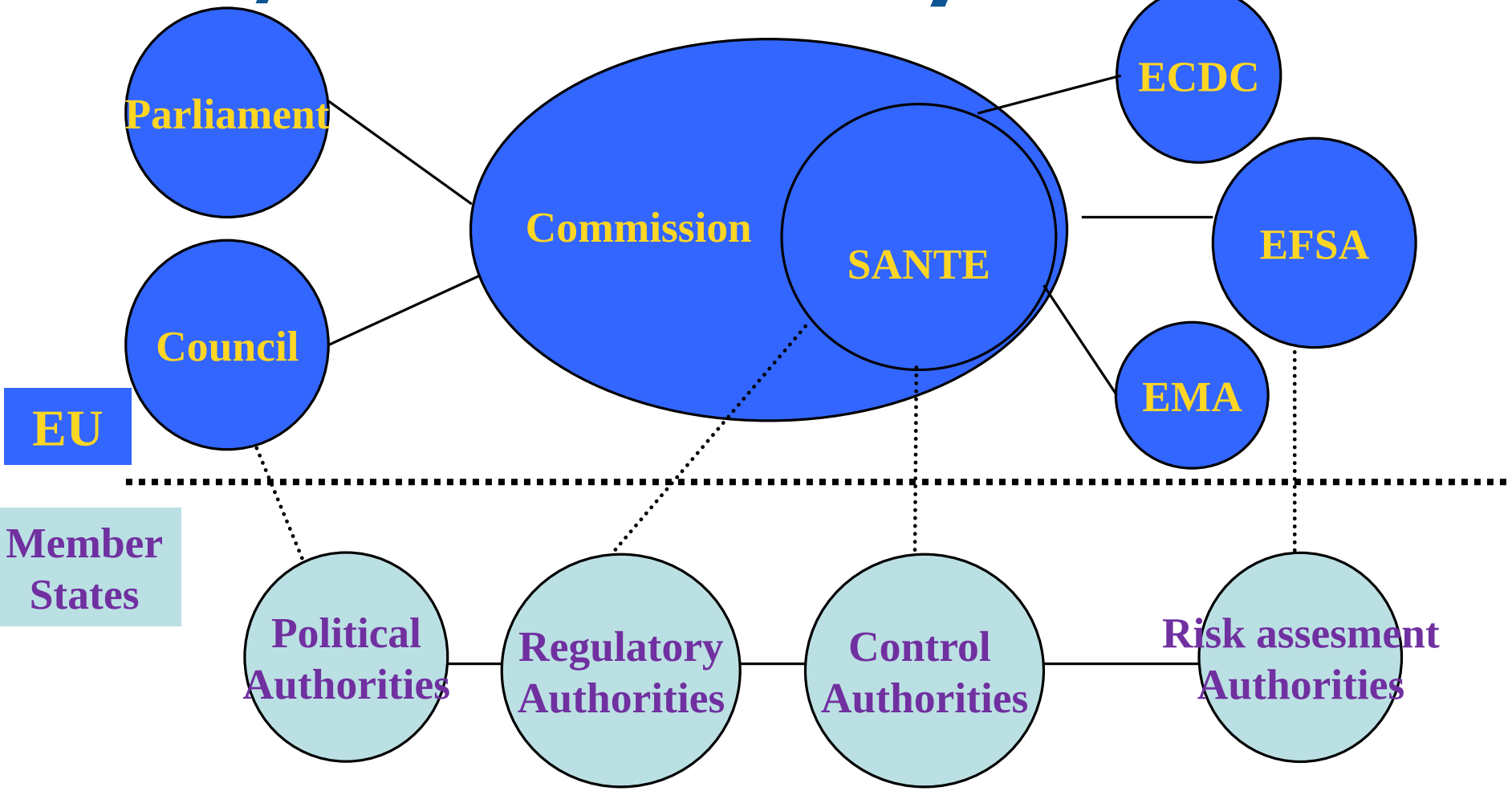
Food safety risk assessment and setting rules at EU level

Health and Consumers

The European Union:
>500 million people – 28 countries

EU/MS Food Safety structures



Risk management <-> Risk assessment

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Why decision making at EU-level on food safety?

- Same high level of protection of all consumers
  - **Domestically produced**
  - **From other Member States**
  - **From Countries all over the world**
- One internal market without border controls
- Facilitating import and export, as same conditions in whole EU

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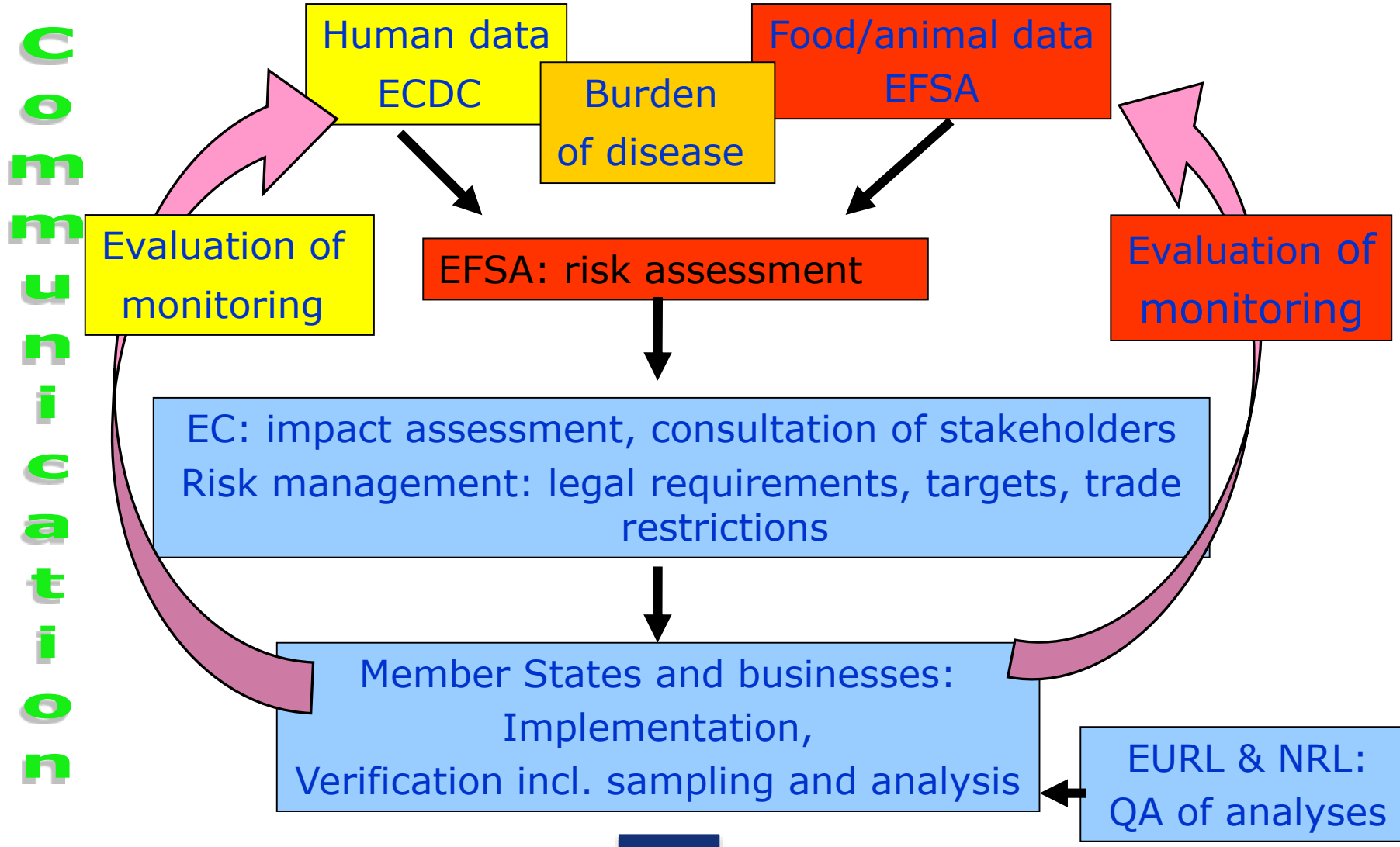
Farm to fork approach but not covered by EU rules: private kitchen hygiene

Starting from scientific advice: some European risk assessment bodies

- European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC, human aspects)
- European Medicines Agency (EMA)

The Commission has the obligation to **consult** the relevant risk assessment body before proposing legislation to ensure a science-based approach.

A coordinated risk analysis approach on food safety



Harmonisation at international level

food safety
CODEX

animal health
OIE

plant health
IPPC

Regulation (EC) No 178/2002
General Food law: Applied to food hygiene

Competent authorities

Food business operators

Regulation (EC)
No 882/2004
General rules
for official controls

Regulation (EC)
No 854/2004
Specific rules for official controls
on products of animal origin

Regulation (EC)
No 852/2004
General rules
on hygiene

Regulation (EC)
No 853/2004
Specific hygiene rules
for products of animal origin

Regulation (EC)
No 2074/2005
Other implementing rules

Regulation (EC)
No 2073/2005
Microbiological criteria

The General Food Law

General principles

Risk analysis and scientific basis

Precautionary principle

Protection of consumers' interests

Principle of transparency

The General Food Law

General requirements

Food safety requirements

Presentation of products

Responsibilities

Traceability

Responsibilities

Operators	Member States
• Ensuring that all stages for which they are responsible are carried out hygienically • Traceability • Withdrawal of non compliant food + info consumer • Information to competent authorities + collaboration	• Enforcement of food law and Official controls • Public communication on food safety and risk

Traceability

Applies to all stages of the food chain

Registration of food businesses

Allocation of a registration number

Identification of providers and clients

Registration number follows the product to its destination

Procedures to withdraw food from the market

Adequate records

Characteristics of R852/2004

All foods

Stable to table (integrated approach)

All stages: production, processing, distribution, exports

Primary responsibility = food business operators

Requirements in R852/2004

Registration of all food businesses

Hygiene requirements

HACCP (not compulsory for farms)

Guides to good practice

HACCP

⇨ ***All food business operators*** *shall:*

Put in place, implement and maintain a permanent procedure ***based on the 7 HACCP principles***

Provide the competent authority with evidence of compliance

Ensure that documents describing procedures are up-to-date all times

Retain documents for official controls.

Pre-requisite Requirements

Requirements for premises and equipment

Cleaning and disinfection

Pest control procedures

Water supply

Personal hygiene

Raw materials

Handling of food

Training

Microbiological criteria in food

Main objectives

To ensure a high level of human health protection

⇨ **Reduction of human cases of foodborne diseases**

To harmonise microbiological criteria in the EU

⇨**Uniform rules for food business operators**

Microbiological criteria

Two types of microbiological criteria (1)

Process hygiene criteria

Indicate the acceptable functioning of production process

Stage: during the process, not when placed on the market

Actions when unsatisfactory results

= Corrective actions defined in HACCP programme

Improvement of production hygiene

Selection of raw materials

Microbiological criteria

Two types of microbiological criteria (2)

Food safety criteria

Defines the acceptability of the product/batch

Stage: products placed on the market

Actions when unsatisfactory results

- **Withdrawal or recall**
- **Further processing (not yet at retail level)**
- **Other corrective actions based on HACCP programme**

Characteristics of R853/2004

One simplified text

Unprocessed/processed food of animal origin

red and white meat, farmed and wild game, MSM, meat products, live bivalve molluscs, fishery products, raw milk & dairy products, eggs (& products), frogs′ legs, snails, rendered animal fat & greaves, treated stomachs, bladders & intestines, gelatine, collagen, honey

Does not apply to retail sale

Flexibility

Requirements in R853/2004

Approval of establishments

Identification/health mark

HACCP based

Level of details deemed necessary

Official Controls

R882/2004

Distribution of responsibilities

Operators apply EU standards

National authorities control the correct implementation of EU standards by operators

Community controls verify how official controls are organised by national authorities and how national authorities ensure delivery of EU standards

Official Controls

R882/2004 - National level

General requirements applicable to official controls (on a risk basis and with appropriate frequency)

Documented procedures (including HACCP assessment)

Training of control staff in food safety issues (including HACCP assessment)

Enforcement powers and measures (actions, sanctions)

Multi-annual control plans

Official Controls

R882/2004

Community level

FVO based in Grange (Ireland)

Objectives in Member States

- **Verify the correct implementation of the EU legislation**
- **Verify the functioning and organisation of competent authorities**
- **Investigate important or emergency situations**

Official Controls

R854/2004

National level

Meat (ante and post mortem inspection)

Fishery products and LBM

Milk

Eggs and the other products covered by Reg 853

Official Controls

R882/2004

Community level

Objectives in Third Countries

- **Verify the compliance or equivalence of third country legislation and systems with EU legislation**
- **Examine the functioning and organisation of competent authorities (powers, independence)**
- **control the assurances given regarding compliance or equivalence to EU requirements**

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EU Border Import Checks

*The EU is currently the **largest importer** of food and feed products in the world*

*Intra-Union trade in a **single market** since 1993 :*

- ➔ *only possible with a high level of safety*
- ➔ *correctly harmonised and applied in the EU*
- ➔ *equivalence between production and importation*

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Principles:

- food imported into the EU must comply with the same rules as food produced in the EU.
- Compliant with the requirements of the SPS agreement of the WTO / international standards

- Food of non-animal origin (fruit, vegetables, …)
  - Less stringent import conditions
- Products of animal origin
  - Strict/systematic controls at entrance of the EU (Border Inspection Posts)
- Composite products: products containing both ingredients of non-animal origin and **processed** products of animal origin.

Export helpdesk: http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/index_en.htm

Import - Legislative framework

EU Directives and Regulations

binding on all 28 Member States

Requirements on import controls:

- Council Directive 91/496/EEC for live animals
- Council Directive 97/78/EC for products of animal origin

Import - Border Inspection Posts

Imports of all animals and products of animal origin undergo mandatory veterinary controls at approved EU Border Inspection Posts (BIPs)

Approval procedures for BIPs are set down in EU law

- **266 BIPs in 28 MS**
- **23 in 2 EEA countries (IC + NO)**
- **2 in Faroe Islands**
- **2 in CH**
- **2 in GL**

Import - Border Inspection Posts

- Approved entry points at EU borders

- Legal requirements for location, infrastructure, equipment, trained staff, documentation and IT systems

- Subject to regular audits by DG SANTE F (Grange, Ireland)

Import – Health conditions

For harmonised products:

- *Authorised third **countries** (+ approved residues control plan)*
- *Harmonised **certification** on animal and public health*
- *Approved **establishments** (listed in TRACES)*

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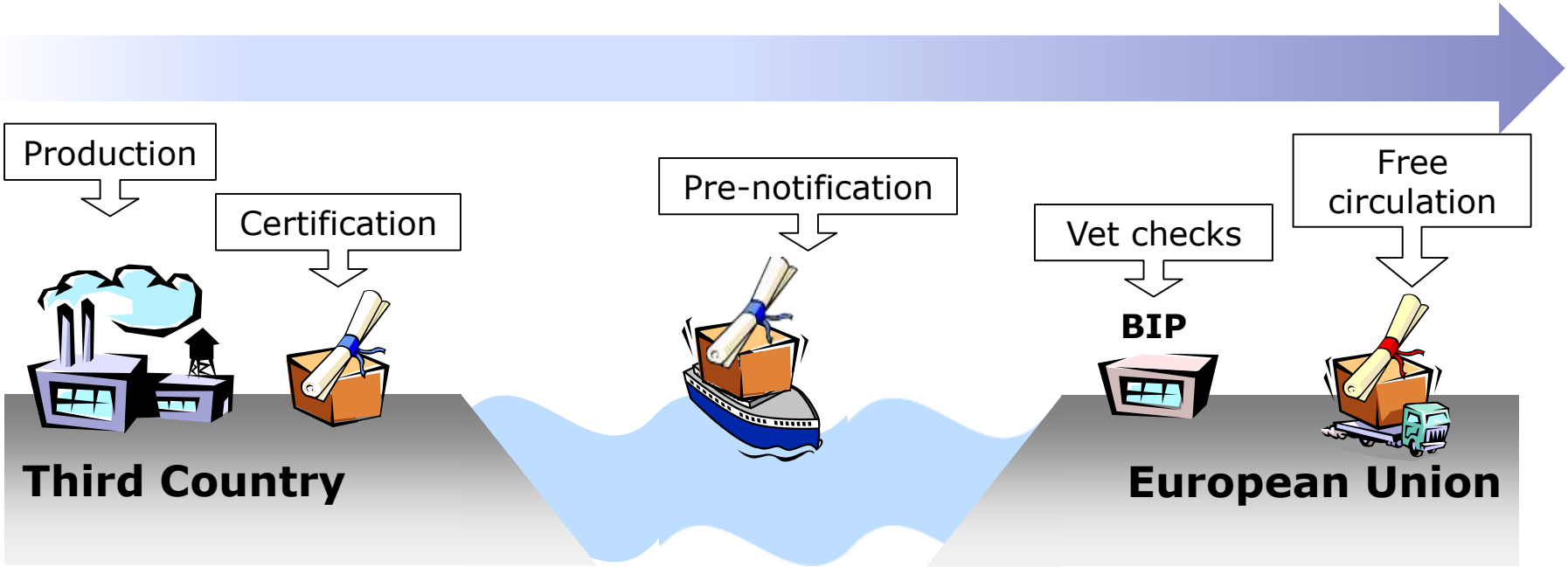
Food of animal origin: Certification

- *Model certificates with two parts:*
  - **Part I: Details on consignment**
  - **Part II: certification of compliance with relevant EU rules**
- *Signature by competent authority or official veterinarian*

Import – Chronology



Import – Checks at BIP

- *Documentary check: 100%*

- *Identity check: 100%*

- *Physical check: from 1 to 100%*

Import – Documentary check

- *Original certificate*
- *Authorised third country of origin*
- *Approved establishment (listed in TRACES)*
- *Correctly fulfilled according to model EU certificates*
- *Properly signed and stamped*
- *Completed before the consignment leaves the country of dispatch*

Import – Identity check

- *Correspondence between product and health certificate*
- *Container identification, seal number*
- *Identification mark on label, total weight, number of packages, production lot, expiration dates on label*

Import – Physical check

- *Physical checks on samples throughout the consignment*
- *Temperature of transport*
- *Visual and organoleptic examination*
- *Laboratory samples for various examinations:*
  - *Microbiological*
  - *Chemical*
  - *Environmental contamination*
  - *Drug residues*

Random sampling programme ➔ consignment released before results
Suspicion or safeguard measure ➔ consignment detained until results

Import – Check results

- *Common Veterinary Entry Document (CVED) issued and presented to Customs*
- *Fees paid for any inspection costs*

- *Allowed for free movement in the EU*

Rejected, options are:

- *Destruction*
- *Re-dispatch to the third country of origin*
- *(Special treatment)*

Import – Unfavourable consequences

In cases of serious or repeated infringements of EU legislation, measures may be taken against third countries:

- *Re-enforced controls against an establishment*
- *Safeguard measures with specific constraints or import ban against a third country or a region*

Import – Useful Web links

General import issues such a listing of third countries:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/international_affairs/trade_en

Veterinary border control:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/vet-border-control_en

Food establishment listing:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/biosafety/food_hygiene/eu_food_establishments_en

Animal By-products:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/animal-by-products/approved-establishments_en

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Thank you for your attention!

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