

TACD

TRANS ATLANTIC
CONSUMER DIALOGUE

DIALOGUE TRANSATLANTIQUE
DES CONSOMMATEURS

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HORMONE TREATED BEEF

The TACD is concerned about the outcome and implications of the on-going hormones dispute. The dispute raises questions about the level and nature of evidence needed by individual governments to maintain safety standards higher than international standards. In particular, this brings into question the ability of governments to take precautionary measures in the face of scientific uncertainty.

Clarification is therefore needed on how the precautionary principle, as set out in Article 5.7 of the SPS Agreement should be applied in a more comprehensive and consistent manner in practice.

Recent EU risk assessments have given further weight to questions about the safety of hormone-treated beef. In addition, EU consumers do not wish to consume hormone-treated beef based on a number of other reasons including environmental and ethical concerns.

The TACD urges the TEP to work out an agreement that comprises the following elements:

(a) Recognition that the current state of scientific knowledge and the existing scientific uncertainties provide a reasonable basis for differing national decisions, including both the EU's precautionary approach and the US's permissive approach; (b) Agreement on a research agenda that should be pursued to reduce the scientific uncertainties in hopes of eventually reaching a consensus policy approach.

