EUROPEAN COMMISSION
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Informal meeting with interested parties on horse meat issue: extracts from the arrivals and doorsteps

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On 13 February, Agriculture Ministers from the EU's most affected countries will discuss in Brussels the scandal over horse meat in products labelled as beef. Germany , France, Britain, Luxembourg, Sweden, Romania and Poland, sent their representatives to the Brussels talks with the EU Health Commissioner Tonio Borg. The meeting is being chaired by Ireland, which holds the EU's otating presidency. Tonio Borg said the European Commission, the bloc's executive, was working closely with national authorities to identify the source of the problem. He stressed that it was an issue of deceptive labelling, and not a health scare at present. 'The consumer was consuming, until now, a healthy product, but a different healthy product from what he thought he was eating,' Tonio Borg said. Ready meal makers Findus and Comigel, as well as supermarket chains in France and Britain, have had to withdraw products over the past weeks after tests revealed they contained up to 100 per cent horse meat.

Only the original language version is authentic and it prevails in the event of its differing from the translated versions.

TIME	DESCRIPTION	DURATION
00:00:00	Title	00:00:05
00:00:05	Owen Paterson, British Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, arriving	00:00:06
00:00:11	SOUNDBITE (in English) by Owen Paterson: I have some very clear ideas on how we can help re-establish public confidence. I would like to see DNA testing of processed meet products during process and as finished product established as soon as possible right across every Member State. I would like to see the report which the Commission is currently working on labelling of processed meat products accelerated very rapidly because I think that we can get agreement to ensure that countries of origin are marked on these products.	00:00:36
00:00:47	Simon Coveney, Irish Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food:	00:00:04

00:00:51	SOUNDBITE (in English) by Simon Coveney, Irish Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine: What we want is first of all an open conversation on how we can collectively response to this because a number of countries have now domestic investigations to try to find what happened, because in simple terms horse meet has been sold as beef meet and this is totally unacceptable from a consumer point of view but also from the integral food chain in the EU and we need to establish who is responsible, how this happened, who has been providing horse meet as beef product and that requires a collective response from the European Union and from the European Commission.	00:00:40
00:01:31	SOUNDBITE (in English) Simon Coveney: The EU Commission is doing a report right now on labelling of processed food. So we would certainly like to see that report fast track now, and have a look at recommendations and hopefully implement those recommendations sooner than later.	00:00:17
00:01:48	SOUNDBITE (in English) Eskil Erlandsson, Swedish Minister for fisheries: I want to now tonight whether any authorities or Member States have any ideas on how to increase legislation or change the legislation if it is necessary. In Sweden, the expert authorities said that the legislation is ok, it is up to the producer to label what is inside a package and not something else.	00:00:33
00:02:21	SOUNDBITE (in English) by Daniel Constantin, Romanian Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Romania took all the necessary measures in order to help the European partners. In my opinion the European agriculture sector meets the highest standards on the world so in this moment we have to clarify and identify all the necessary measures in order to protect the consumer's rights and in order to protect credibility of agricultural sector in Europe.	00:00:31
00:02:52	Arrival of Stéphane le Foll, French Minister for Agriculture, Food and Forestry	00:00:05
00:02:57	SOUNDBITE (in French) Stéphane le Foll saying that: I would like to tell that I was in touch with the British Minister today. Our position on labelling and surveillance at EU level will be supported jointly by France and UK.	00:00:00

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