



Customs work for food safety

As the gatekeeper for the Single Market, customs have to ensure that all products entering the European Union comply with the rules on safety and security.

All products of animal origin entering the EU are subject to import controls by veterinary surgeons at border inspections posts. Customs authorities have to make sure that these controls are not bypassed.



Recent seizures of chicken meat hidden behind wooden floor panels, and of other products of animal origin not conforming to EU import requirements, underline the importance of this role.

Working together to reduce risks for citizens

The European Union can be best protected against threats to public and animal health on the basis of a **coordinated approach for controls**.

The enormous flow of goods from third countries into the EU requires customs to use **risk management** to select the most hazardous consignments for controls. For that purpose, a set of **risk indicators** has been developed to help Member States carry out risk assessment. These are communicated electronically via the Community Risk Management system.



Close cooperation between customs and veterinary services ensures the proper development and enforcement of the control strategy. Cooperation between customs authorities in the 27 Member States, information-sharing on upcoming public or animal health risks or on the illegal importation of products of animal origin or live animals is ensured through the Community Risk Management system. This

system is also used to quickly alert Member States' customs authorities to specific safeguard measures taken at EU level in the field of public and animal health.

The effectiveness of controls is enhanced by the use of sniffer dogs and x-ray scanners, which screen large quantities of commercial consignments as well as luggage. Sufficient **training and guidance** for officials in charge of carrying out controls is necessary to ensure a high level of performance.