

**Question for written answer E-002078/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Removing the minimum liver weight requirement for foie gras production

The public consultation on poultry meat marketing standards held between April and May 2023 saw overwhelming support for removing the minimum liver weight requirement for foie gras.

Minimum liver weights are not 'traditional' or science-based, but rather were established in 1991 and modified in 1995 'taking partly into account data from technical studies carried out at that time'¹. Those studies were commissioned by foie gras producers and were neither peer-reviewed nor corroborated by independent studies or assessments.

Force-feeding, which is needed to achieve such weights, runs counter to the 1998 Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare report² and all peer-reviewed scientific studies³.

The Commission has acknowledged⁴ 'alternative methods for the production of foie gras which remain a minor practice in the EU'. In fact, gavage-free methods are impeded by the minimum liver weight requirement.

1. How will the Commission respond to the overwhelming support shown in the public consultation for removing the minimum liver weight requirement?

¹ Commission's answer to Written Question E-000356/2017 and others.

² 'Welfare Aspects of the Production of Foie Gras in Ducks and Geese', European Commission, Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare, Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety, 16 December 1998.

³ E.g. Rochlitz, I. and Broom, D.M., 'The welfare of ducks during foie gras production', *Animal Welfare*, Vol. 26, No 2, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2017, pp. 135-149.

⁴ In the answer to Written Question E-012154/2015, among others.

2. Will it propose scrapping this requirement in the new regulation, thus allowing foie gras production without force-feeding, in order to protect animal welfare, consumer choice and higher-welfare farming activities in all EU Member States?

Submitted:30.6.2023