



10 reasons TTIP is bad for good food and farming

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The United States and the European Union have launched negotiations on a new Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP): a free trade agreement that aims to “harmonize” standards and regulations in both regions to expand corporate profits. However, the regulations in question are critical to creating more sustainable, healthy food systems in Europe and in the United States. In May 2013, over 20 agribusiness industry groups—particularly from the meat, dairy and grain industries—submitted comments to the U.S. Trade Representative’s (USTR) office outlining their clear interests in TTIP. Agribusiness on both sides is pushing to rollback regulations that hinder their profits at the expense of food safety, farmers and ranchers, consumers and animal welfare.

REASON 1

The U.S. meat industry wants the EU to begin treating its meat with chemicals to eliminate harmful bacteria: chlorine for poultry, other organic acids for meats such as pork.

The use of hyper-chlorinated water as an anti-microbial treatment was, and continues to be today, the standard practice in the majority of poultry establishments in the United States...U.S. chicken processed with the use of hyper-chlorinated water is consumed every day by over 300 million American citizens and by consumers in the nearly 100 countries to which the U.S. industry currently exports product, all without any negative health effect.

—The U.S. National Chicken Council (NCC), USA Poultry & Egg Export Council (USAPEEC), and the National Turkey Federation (NTF)¹

The National Pork Council wants the EU to approve lactic acid washes for pork—similar to EU’s approval in February 2013 of lactic acid washes for beef.² The approval was likely given with the expectation that European beef exports to the United States will increase as a result of meeting this U.S. beef industry demand.

REASON 2

The U.S. meat industry wants the EU to remove the ban on the use of antibiotics as growth promoters.

Eighty percent of the antibiotics sold in the United States are linked to food animal production, including antibiotic use for growth promotion. In 2013, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that a minimum of 23,000 deaths occur each year due to antibiotic resistance.³ The U.S. and the EU need to strengthen standards that prevent the use of antibiotics in the food system, not encourage their expansion through free trade agreements.



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REASON 3

The U.S. meat industry wants the EU to remove its ban on ractopamine—a failed asthma drug that serves as a growth promoting hormone in animals (banned in 160 countries).

The North American Meat Association, the National Pork Council, the American Meat Institute and other industry lobby groups are pushing the U.S. government to continue pressuring the EU to remove this ban which they contend is “not scientifically justified and inconsistent with international standards.”⁴ Ractopamine is banned in many countries because it can cruelly impact animal health—mimicking stress hormones, which in pigs can cause tremendous distress and even death.⁵ There are also concerns that consumption of meat with ractopamine may interfere with the control of asthma by other medications.⁶

The “international standard” the industry refers to is the extremely controversial vote in the international standard setting body Codex Alimentarius that approved its use by a margin of two votes out of more than 180 government members and was based on a literature review of six studies, three furnished by the ractopamine manufacturer.⁷

REASON 4

The U.S. grain industry would like to see faster approvals of new genetically modified (GM) seed varieties used for feed in the EU.

The U.S. seed and grain industry associations such as the U.S. Grains Council want faster approvals of GM traits in grains used for animal feed than the current EU framework allows.⁸ Each trait requires its own approval in the EU, whereas new varieties being developed in the U.S. and elsewhere have multiple traits in one seed. The industry wants these multiple traits to be approved at the same time and at a much faster rate.

REASON 5

U.S. meat and grain industries want the EU to remove restrictions on animal byproducts in feed and pet food.

The American Feed Industry Association (whose companies represent 75 percent of the feed manufacturing in the U.S.) are challenging a 2002 EU regulation that places restrictions on animal byproducts used in feed or pet food. They contend that the industry experienced a 62 percent drop in volume of exports in the last ten years because of these EU restrictions.⁹ Animal byproducts in feed have resulted in major outbreaks of animal diseases such as swine fever, foot and mouth disease and mad cow disease, causing tremendous economic losses to producers and increasing the risk of human and pet infections.

REASON 6

EU is considering restrictions on meat and dairy products from offspring of cloned animals; the U.S. meat and dairy industries want no such restrictions

The issue of trade policies for products from the offspring of cloned animals is itself a concern and holds the significant potential to negatively impact U.S. exports to the EU.

—The National Milk Producers Federation and U.S. Export Dairy Council¹⁰

Industry contends that neither the EU nor the U.S. have a tracking mechanism of offspring of cloned animals and therefore the rule would be difficult to implement and should not be considered.

REASON 7

The U.S. meat and dairy industries want to weaken provisions for animal welfare in the EU.

American and European civil society have pushed hard over the years to strengthen animal welfare standards in both regions. California is in the process of strengthening its own regulation on layer hens. However, the U.S. meat and dairy industries are pushing to eliminate or weaken animal welfare standards that they say are “barriers to trade.” For instance, the National Milk Producers Federation and U.S. Export Dairy Council Dairy would like to see limits on somatic cell counts in dairy herds removed¹¹—the cell count indicates mastitis, a painful infection of the breast tissue in cows. Other regulations, such as the pig housing regulations that came into force in the EU in 2013 are also being targeted.

REASON 8

The U.S. meat industry wants to remove European duties on artificially cheap pork products, frozen poultry parts and dairy.

The U.S. National Pork Council wants to see the elimination of all European customs duties on pork; Yum! Restaurants International (the owner of fast food chains such as Kentucky Fried Chicken and Pizza Hut) wants the elimination of all customs duties on frozen poultry parts.¹² The National Dairy Council and U.S. Export Dairy Council would like to see all European variable duties on dairy removed given the \$1 billion USD trade deficit of the U.S. in dairy to the EU.

The U.S. meat industry claims to be internationally competitive, but this is because a few meat companies control the U.S. market at the expense of the vast majority of producers,

workers in their supply chain, and the public who pay the real cost of their environmental and public health impacts.

REASON 9

U.S. agribusiness would like to use TTIP to undermine the EU's "precautionary principle," which reinforces stronger food safety standards.

The U.S. National Pork Producers Council and others want the EU to recognize U.S. food safety standards as equivalent so that any EU standards related to animal welfare or even "newly emerging or unanticipated technological developments" cannot be used to block U.S. exports. The American Meat Institute notes:

Structural disparities exist in the regulatory systems of the two economies as they relate to food safety and agricultural risk management. These differences pose serious challenges to any meaningful regulatory cohesion in the sector and must be addressed by the TTIP negotiations in order to unlock the economic potential of this relationship. The two most obvious examples of regulatory disparity is the EU's reliance on the "precautionary principle" to evaluate innovative technologies and its acceptance of cultural preferences (or "other legitimate factors") as a basis for regulatory action.¹³

REASON 10

Agribusiness and some members of Congress are pushing for enforcement of food safety rules in TTIP that go beyond WTO rules.

Seventy-six members of the U.S. Congress have lobbied the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) on behalf of the agribusiness lobby to make food safety standards "fully enforceable" in TTIP.¹⁴ This could mean that the U.S. government would sue the EU directly over the implementation of any agreements on food safety in TTIP, without even the limited procedures and protections established at the WTO.

Sample of U.S. agribusiness associations and food companies that have submitted comments to USTR and engaging on TTIP

Meat Industry (including animal genetics and vaccines)

- National Pork Producers Council
- American Meat Institute
- International Serum Industry Association
- U.S. Meat Export Federation
- Cobb-Vantress, Inc
- National Cattlemen's Beef Association
- National Chicken Council
- USA Poultry & Egg Export Council
- National Turkey Federation
- North American Meat Association

Dairy

- Fonterra (USA)
- National Milk Producers Federation
- U.S. Dairy Export Council

Grain

- U.S. Grains Council
- National Oilseed Processors Association
- American Feed Industry Association
- American Seed Trade Association
- Biotechnology Industry Association
- National Corn Growers Association
- National Grain and Feed Association and North American Export Grain Association
- American Soybean Association

Retail, Food and Beverage Companies

- Nestle
- National Grocery Manufacturers Association
- Yum! Restaurants International
- WalMart
- The Coca-Cola Company

Endnotes

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4. Mark Dopp and William Westman, "Reply to Request for Comments Concerning Proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Agreement"; Docket No: USTR-2013-0019," American Meat Institute, *Regulations.gov*, May 10, 2013, <http://www.regulations.gov#!documentDetail;D=USTR-2013-0019-0205> (Date accessed: March 26, 2014).

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6. Karen Hansen-Kuhn and Steven Suppan, "Promises and Perils of the TTIP: Negotiating a Transatlantic Agricultural Market, *IATP.org*, October 23, 2013, <http://www.iatp.org/documents/promises-and-perils-of-the-ttip-negotiating-a-transatlantic-agricultural-market> (Date accessed: March 26, 2014).

7. *Ibid*, pg. 8

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9. Gina Tumbarello, "Reply to Docket Number USTR-2013-0019 – Request for Comments Concerning Proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Agreement," American Feed Industry Association, *Regulations.gov*, May 10, 2013, <http://www.regulations.gov#!documentDetail;D=USTR-2013-0019-0339> (Date accessed: March 26, 2014).

10. National Milk Producers Federation and U.S. Dairy Export Council, "Comments by the National Milk Producers Federation And the U.S. Dairy Export Council Regarding the Request for Comments Concerning Proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Docket Number USTR-2013-0019," *Regulations.gov*, May 10, 2013, <http://www.regulations.gov#!documentDetail;D=USTR-2013-0019-0340> (Date accessed: March 26, 2014).

11. *Ibid*.

12. Yum! Restaurants International, "Reply to Request for Comments on Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership(TTIP) – Docket No. USTR-2013-0019," *Regulations.gov*, May 3, 2013, <http://www.regulations.gov#!documentDetail;D=USTR-2013-0019-0034> (Date accessed: March 26, 2014).

13. Mark Dopp and William Westman, "Reply to Request for Comments Concerning Proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Agreement; Docket No: USTR-2013-0019," pg. 3, American Meat Institute, *Regulations.gov*, May 10, 2013, <http://www.regulations.gov#!documentDetail;D=USTR-2013-0019-0205> (Date accessed: March 26, 2014).

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