



# Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)



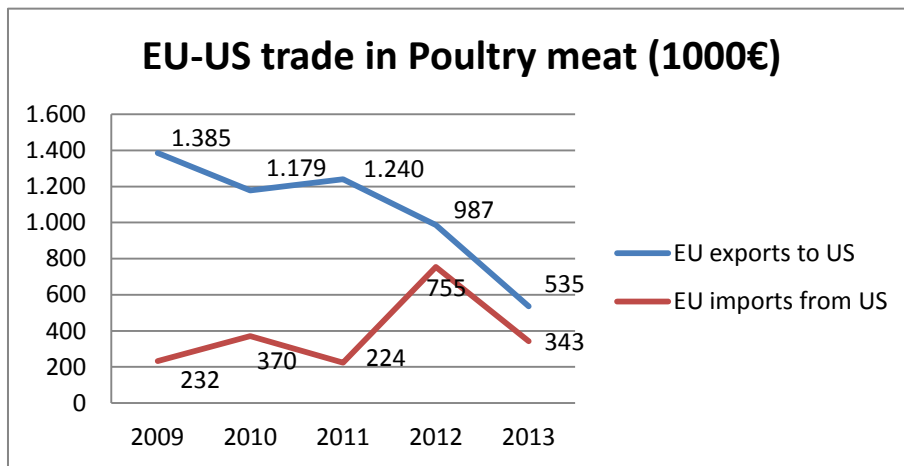
## 'Broiler' Production in the EU and US

Each year, billions of chickens - or 'broilers' as they are termed by industry - are raised in industrial production systems in both the EU and US for the production of meat. Broiler chickens have no legislative protection in the US.<sup>1</sup> In the EU, legislation has been adopted to improve the welfare and living conditions of broiler chickens, but there is still great room for improvement.

Broiler chickens experience crowded indoor confinement, unnatural lighting regimes, poor air quality, stressful handling and transportation, and inadequate stunning and slaughter methods. Breeding practices are also unacceptable on both sides of the Atlantic. Broiler chickens are selectively bred for rapid growth and are consequently prone to a variety of severe skeletal and metabolic disorders that can cause pain, suffering and even death. In addition, broiler breeders are also subjected to severe feed restriction, and males may undergo painful toe and beak amputations performed without pain relief.

### Production and trade in poultry meat

The US is presently the biggest exporter of poultry products worldwide. In 2011, a total of 8.6 billion broiler chickens valued at \$23.2 billion produced 49.7 billion pounds (22.5 million tonnes) of poultry meat in the US. Georgia, Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, North Carolina and Texas are the biggest state producers. The US exported 295,000 tonnes of poultry in 2011, but only imported 10,000 tonnes.<sup>2</sup> As illustrated below, trade in broiler meat between the US and EU is declining.



Source: European Commission Market Access Database

In 2012, 12.5 million tonnes of poultry meat, primarily from broiler chickens, was produced in the EU.<sup>3</sup> Just six Member States are responsible for 71.3% of poultry production in the Union: France (13.6%), UK (12.8%), Poland (12.4%), Germany (11.4%), Spain (11%) and Italy (10%).<sup>4</sup> During the

<sup>1</sup> There is no legislative protection on farm, but some US states do have humane slaughter laws that apply to poultry.

<sup>2</sup> USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service (2012) Agricultural Statistics 2012, pp. VIII 35-38. [www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Ag\\_Statistics/2012/2012\\_Final.pdf](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Ag_Statistics/2012/2012_Final.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Eurostat Pocketbooks. Agriculture, forestry and fishery statistics. 2013 Edition, p. 85. [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-FK-13-001/EN/KS-FK-13-001-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-FK-13-001/EN/KS-FK-13-001-EN.PDF)

<sup>4</sup> Eurostat Pocketbooks. Agriculture, forestry and fishery statistics. 2013 Edition, p. 88. [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-FK-13-001/EN/KS-FK-13-001-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-FK-13-001/EN/KS-FK-13-001-EN.PDF)



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same year, the EU exported 1.4 million tonnes of poultry meat. It also imports large quantities of poultry meat from third countries; 67% of which comes from Brazil and 23% from Thailand.<sup>5</sup>

Under the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) regime, chicken meat traded between the EU and the US is subject to a tariff of USD 8.8 cents/kg and offal, such as livers, to USD 17.6 cents/kg.<sup>6</sup>

### **PRTs – A non-tariff barrier to trade**

The transatlantic trade in poultry meat is limited at present, primarily because the EU prohibits the import of poultry treated with any substance other than water, unless that substance has been granted EU approval. This means that any chicken processed using pathogen reduction treatments (PRTs) to reduce the amount of microbes on meat cannot be placed on the EU market.

The US has sought the EU's approval of four PRTs (chlorine dioxide, acidified sodium chlorite, trisodium phosphate, and peroxyacids), which the EU has rejected. Given that the EU ban on PRT use effectively excludes US poultry meat from the EU market, the US requested consultations on this matter at the WTO in 2009. There will undoubtedly be considerable pressure from the US poultry industry to eliminate this barrier to trade through the TTIP in order to open up EU markets to US poultry meat products. Conversely, EU Commissioner De Gucht has publicly stated that "the EU ban on chicken carcasses washed with chlorine cannot be over-ridden".<sup>7</sup>

### **Animal welfare concerns**

From an animal protection perspective, the debate about chlorinated chicken overshadows the differences in standards between the EU and US for raising and slaughtering chickens kept for meat production. In the US, there is no legislation for the protection of farmed birds, beyond state legislation relating to slaughter. Poultry are explicitly excluded from the 1966 Animal Welfare Act's definition of what constitutes an animal.

In contrast, Council Directive 2007/43/EC laying down minimum rules for the protection of chickens kept for meat production in the EU. This legislation aimed to reduce overcrowding by introducing a maximum stocking density of 33kg/m<sup>2</sup>, or 39kg/m<sup>2</sup> where stricter standards on other aspects of housing are met. It also lays down other conditions, such as lighting, litter, feeding and ventilation, to improve welfare. While this EU legislation has been the target of justified critique for failing to significantly improve the welfare of chickens in intensive systems and for ignoring the European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) scientific recommendations, it does establish minimum legislative standards for keeping these birds.

### **The transport and slaughter of chickens**

The transport of chickens to slaughter also places the birds under additional stress. First the chickens must be caught and crated. Transport is stressful, as birds experience noise, vibration, motion, overcrowding, feed and water deprivation, social disruption, and potential temperature extremes. Birds can die en route from infectious disease, heart and circulatory disorders, and trauma experienced during catching and crating,<sup>8</sup> including dislocated femurs, crushed skulls, and dislocated

<sup>5</sup> European Commission. EU Market Situation for Poultry. Committee for the Common Organisation of Agricultural Markets. 19 June 2014. <https://circabc.europa.eu/d/d/workspace/SpacesStore/cdd4ea97-73c6-4dce-9b01-ec4fdf4027f9/0%20Circa%20%20poultry%20no%20links.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> DG Trade, Market Access Database. Product code 0207000000

[http://madb.europa.eu/madb/datasetPreviewFormATpubli.htm?datacat\\_id=AT&from=publi](http://madb.europa.eu/madb/datasetPreviewFormATpubli.htm?datacat_id=AT&from=publi) and <http://hts.usitc.gov>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/dec/18/wrong-george-monbiot-nothing-secret-eu-trade-deal>

<sup>8</sup> Nijdam E, Zailan ARM, van Eck JHH, Decuyper E, and Stegeman JA. 2006. Pathological features in dead on arrival broilers with special reference to heart disorders. Poultry Science 85:1303-8.



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and broken bones.<sup>9</sup> Disease and infection on the farm are thought to reduce resistance and the ability of the birds to withstand the stresses associated with live haul.<sup>10</sup>

In the EU, Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations is also intended to extend responsibility for the welfare of animals to all those involved in their commercial transport, including those preparing the animals for shipment. Amongst other technical and administrative provisions, the legislation requires that animals must be fit for transport and be transported in conditions guaranteed not to cause them injury or unnecessary suffering. Adult birds must have access to suitable food and water available to them on all journeys longer than 12 hours.

Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 requires slaughterhouses both in the EU and third countries seeking to export meat to the EU to comply with standards similar to those stipulated in the legislation. The Regulation stipulates that “Animals shall be spared any avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations” and lays out very specific requirements and methods for stunning and slaughter that vary by species, including electrical stun settings for poultry. These requirements and methods are based on underlying scientific study.

The United States also has a federal humane slaughter law.<sup>11</sup> However, the law specifically excludes poultry.

**Humane Society International and World Animal Protection urge TTIP negotiators to ensure that the standards for the welfare of meat chickens are harmonised upwards. The more advanced EU standards should be set as a minimal starting point for negotiation on specific animal product categories.**

**Mutual recognition of standards is not an acceptable approach since it requires that one of the Parties accept market entrance for poultry products that do not meet both animal welfare and public health protection standards imposed on domestic producers. We also recommend that TTIP go further to protect farm animals, specifically on issues relating to housing of farmed birds.**

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<sup>9</sup> Gregory NG and Austin SD. 1992. Causes of trauma in broilers arriving dead at poultry processing plants. *The Veterinary Record* 131:501-3.

<sup>10</sup> Ritz CW, Webster AB, and Czarick M III. 2005. Evaluation of hot weather thermal environment and incidence of mortality associated with broiler live haul. *Journal of Applied Poultry Research* 14(3):594-602.

<sup>11</sup> [www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/rulemaking/humane-methods-of-livestock-slaughter-act](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/rulemaking/humane-methods-of-livestock-slaughter-act)