



PRESS RELEASE

Despite legal concerns, France publishes a new ban on ‘meaty’ terms for plant-based foods

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In a move that borders on the farcical, the French government has once more proposed a ban on the use of ‘meaty’ terms for plant-based alternatives.

France has already attempted to propose such a decree before. The European Vegetarian Union (EVU) and the Association Végétarienne de France (AVF) brought the first decree to court, resulting in the French Conseil d’Etat preferring to [refer the case to the European Court of Justice](#) (ECJ) for clarification, particularly regarding key aspects of food labelling for plant-based products in the EU. Despite the case still pending, the French government has forged ahead with this new decree, effectively banning the use of a series of ‘meaty’ terms for plant-based alternatives.

Announced on Tuesday 27 February, the new decree bans the use of terms such as ‘steak’, ‘ham’, ‘bacon’ and ‘sausage’ with a total of 21 names, for products which are entirely plant-based and produced in France. This step was announced during the Salon de l’Agriculture, an agricultural fair that was rocked with violent protests this year. The announcement and publication of the new decree in these circumstances, suggest that it aims to soothe livestock farmers with conciliatory - if superficial and attention-grabbing - policies.

Ronja Berthold, Senior Policy Manager at the EVU explains: “The French government continues to act dubiously vis-a-vis respect for EU law and internal market rules. This latest development is effectively a legal move to circumvent the ECJ’s upcoming decision.” She moreover adds that “The ECJ decision must clarify the rules at EU level - and therefore end this legal back and forth which ultimately hurts and confuses French and European consumers and producers”.

While the new decree is due to come into effect in three months’ time, its future and viability are already being questioned. Meanwhile, the EVU continues to eagerly await the ECJ’s response to the ongoing court case - whose implications will have far-reaching effects on the food labelling of plant-based meat alternatives across the European Union.

For media inquiries, please contact: communications@euroveg.eu

About the European Vegetarian Union:

The European Vegetarian Union (EVU) is the umbrella association of 46 civil society organisations in 28 countries. The EVU represents the voice of the growing number of European consumers shifting towards a more plant-based diet. As such, we advocate for a favourable food environment that makes it easier to choose more plant-based foods and dishes. www.euroveg.eu