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National Foreign Trade Council accuses EU of putting up trade barriers in the guise of health and safety rules

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KAI RYSSDAL, anchor:

An American trade organization has accused the European Union of putting up trade barriers in the guise of health and safety rules. Stephen Beard reports.

STEPHEN BEARD reporting:

The National Foreign Trade Council has studied more than a dozen EU rules and concluded that they're based on excessive caution. The council says the EU takes an exaggerated view of risk and, as a result, effectively bans some American products which are considered perfectly safe in the US. Genetically modified food is only one example. The council says the EU is stifling scientific progress, but British anti-GM campaigner Claire Devorick says she supports the EU's tough health and safety rules.

Ms. CLAIRE DEVORICK: It's not that we're against scientific progress by any means, but that this must be done in a measured and considered way rather than being rushed through the desire of perhaps industry to reap a quick profit.

BEARD: Nevertheless, **the council says EU regulations give an unfair advantage to European companies.** In London, this is Stephen Beard for MARKETPLACE.

RYSSDAL: This is PRI.