

SITUATION ON THE USE OF CLONED ANIMALS AND THEIR OFFSPRING

EFSA: Technical meeting with
stakeholders

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- It is very unlikely that any difference exists in terms of food safety between food products originating from clones and their progeny compared with those derived from conventionally bred animals
- The health and welfare of a significant proportion of clones have been found to be adversely affected...
- ...but the proportion of unhealthy clones is likely to decrease as the technology improves.

European Group of Ethics

- At present there are no convincing arguments to justify the production of food from clones and their offspring.
- If in the future food products derived from cloned animals were to be introduced to the European market, some requirements must be met.
- These requirements concern mainly traceability of imports of semen and embryos, traceability and identification of animals, provisions for the welfare of the clones and labelling of food products.

US: Food and Drugs Administration

- Meat and milk from clones and the offspring of clones from any species traditionally consumed as food, are as safe to eat as food from conventionally bred animals.
- In 2001, U.S. producers agreed to refrain from introducing meat or milk from clones or their progeny into the food supply
- U.S. Department of Agriculture will convene stakeholders to discuss a smooth and orderly market transition

Market issues

- As clones are very expensive and so they would not be expected to enter the food supply in any significant number. They will only be used for breeding.
- It is not expected that food products (milk and meat) obtained from clones or their offspring will be placed on the market before a two to five years period.
- No specific health risks have been identified so far for semen and embryos from cloned donor animals which would justify specific import restrictions.

Legal issues

- The legal framework applicable to the possible commercialisation of food products derived from cloned animals or their offspring will need to be clarified, as well as the desirability of new legislation.

Food Safety

- The main conclusion is that according to the information which is available, there is no element that might lead the Commission to conclude that there is a food safety problem on the consumption of food products derived from cloned animals or their offspring.

Animal Health and Welfare

- Further studies and analyses on long-term animal welfare and health implications for clones and their offspring are indicated.
- Code of Conduct on farm animal breeding, including animal cloning, was recommended by EGE. The Commission services will further investigate how this could be addressed.

Consumer issues

- The Commission is working on a Eurobarometer: results will be available on the second half of 2008.
- In the case that the need of consumer information is established, it will be necessary to develop certain policy instruments at EU level.

International issues

- In the case such a consumer information measure is required the question "how to address it at international level" must be solved.
- TBT agreement would apply in the event that there are no food safety issues related to cloning, or if a non-health-related concern underlies the labelling requirement.

Thank very much!!!

■ http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/index_en.htm

