

News from Europe

Animal cloning

In November 2010 Eurogroup for Animals reports that in the latest Eurobarometer survey on biotechnology, which included questions on the cloning of animals, the results make it clear that Europe's citizens believe cloning is unsafe, unnatural and should be regulated by the EU.

The survey follows the European Parliament's vote in favour of a ban for cloning animals for food production and a proposed temporary ban on cloning animals for food production disclosed in a leaked draft report of the European Commission.

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the cloning process are born with significant deformities and often suffer greatly throughout their short lifespan and reiterates their call for an immediate ban on the cloning of animals for food production, and on

the sale of imported food products from cloned animals and their offspring and calls on all European decision makers to take steps to ensure that the cloning of animals for food production is outlawed immediately.

EU Court rescinds temporary suspension of EU seal trade ban

In November 2010 Eurogroup for Animals reported that the General Court of the EU has repealed the temporary suspension of the EU's ban on the trade in seal products directed toward a specific group of sealers. In July 2010, a group of individual Canadian, Norwegian and Danish Inuits and hunters applied for a stay of execution of the EU Regulation 1007/2009 through the European courts out of fear that the EU ban would negatively affect their livelihood. The Court subsequently granted the applicants a temporary suspension, allowing them to trade seal products in Europe. On Monday 25 October the judge rescinded this suspension, citing several arguments why the applicants could not obtain urgent measures in their favour. The General Court mainly focused on two arguments: It was not presented with clear evidence that the Inuit faced “imminent financial hardship” as a direct result of the ban and points out that a clear exemption has been made for trade within their community and for non-commercial

purposes; The judge also points at that in the absence of implementing rules which have yet to be formulated or implemented, it is impossible to assess what kind of impact the ban will have on their ability to trade and therefore excludes the option of urgent measures being imposed by the Court.

More food information for consumers

Eurogroup for Animals report that on 14th June, Members of the European Parliament voted in favour of new food labelling rules that will ensure that all meat products placed on the European Community market will carry information on where the animal was born, reared and slaughtered. Most notably, MEPs also agreed to the labelling of meat products from slaughter without stunning. This vote follows the first reading by the Parliament and the text is expected to return to the Parliament for a second time following deliberations by Member States. Country of origin labelling was already compulsory for certain food products including beef, honey and vegetables.

Member States agree on new animal testing rules

Eurogroup for Animals welcomed

the Council of the EU's political agreement on its text for the revision of Directive 86/609 on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes. Aimed at revising outdated legislation that no longer reflects current scientific advancement, Eurogroup for Animals reports that the proposed rules are one step closer to being finalised. Eurogroup believes the compromise reached between EU institutions goes a long way towards addressing animal welfare concerns, but there are still a number of exemptions that will, for instance,

“the large majority of animals successfully produced from the cloning process are born with significant deformities”

make the approval of painful procedures on non-human primates for research and testing more likely.

The proposed rules also move towards promoting the 3Rs principles of replacement, reduction and refinement more, hereby urging researchers not to test on animals unnecessarily. Eurogroup highlights however concern regarding the removal of the requirement to use alternatives where available.

European Parliament calls for increased EU action to improve animal welfare

On 5th May 2010, Eurogroup

reported that The European Parliament had called on the European Commission to take clear action to improve the welfare conditions of animals throughout the course of its current mandate. Voting overwhelmingly in favour of Marit Paulsen's report on the Evaluation and assessment of the animal welfare action plan 2006-2010, MEPs signalled that they would like to see measures put in place to develop, implement and enforce animal welfare legislation.

Eurogroup for Animals welcomes the strong support of MEPs' for actions aimed at improving animal well-being in Europe. The awareness of parliamentarians' of animal welfare and their willingness to send a strong message to the European Commission urging it to put animal welfare at the heart of its policy-making is a major step forward.

Following the adoption of this report Eurogroup will continue to work with the European Parliament to urge the Commission to produce a new Animal Welfare Action Plan as soon as possible and to ensure that it contains adequate measures to ensure all current EU law affecting animal welfare is enforced in all member states.

UK criticised for inadequate animal welfare controls, 14 April 2010

In April 2010 Eurogroup reported that the United Kingdom was criticised by the EU's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) for failing to act on their recommendations to improve its animal welfare checks. The UK's central authorities dealing with animal welfare were

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found to not have to properly applied EU rules on space allowances and enrichment for laying hens and for failing to check on the welfare of hens still being kept in battery cages.

Eurogroup reports that in the results of a second audit report, FVO inspectors also criticised aspects of the country's controls on the import and transit of live animals and noted a lack of clear provisions for controls to be carried out at entry points for the import of (non-commercial) pet animals from third countries as well as animals on the CITES list and for failing to put in place the necessary provisions to monitor the movement of live animals.