

## NEWS RELEASE



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### **Europe must listen to its own report and ban cloning of animals for food immediately**

Compassion in World Farming and Eurogroup for Animals are calling for the European Commission to ban the cloning of animals for food immediately after a report by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) outlined grave concerns over its impact on animal welfare while emphasizing there are still too many uncertainties about the technology.

EFSA was charged in March last year to investigate the implications of cloning animals for food, and today it has published its findings in a final report. In January it already came out with a draft report which also acknowledged that cloning was an inefficient method which caused animals to suffer.

Sonja Van Tichelen, director of Eurogroup for Animals, said: "The science is now there. The evidence is clear: there are problems with it.

"The EU is now obligated to follow its own rules. Under the general farm directive a breeding technique that causes suffering should not be allowed. The treaty protocol on animal welfare says full regard should be paid to the welfare of animals. In the light of these legal obligations, it leaves the EU with only one option: to ban animal cloning for food."

Peter Stevenson, Chief Policy Advisor for Compassion in World Farming said: "The new report shows that cloning leads to a high level of suffering for both the surrogate dams and the cloned animals. Cloned fetuses are often larger than normal; this leads to difficult births and often to caesarean deliveries. Many clones die during pregnancy. Of those that survive, many die in the early weeks of life from heart and liver failure, kidney abnormalities and respiratory problems."

The animal welfare groups are urging the Commission to ban the trade and import of products from cloned animals and their offspring once and for all. They are also encouraging the Commission to listen to the advice of its own European

Group on Ethics which concluded in January there is no justifiable reason to approve cloning for food.

Research on both sides of the Atlantic show people do not want food products from cloned animals. The Food and Drug Administration in the US commissioned the report Focus Groups on the Public's Perception on the Health Risk Associated with Products from Animal Clones, which showed the majority of Americans would oppose it. Each of the focus groups surveyed for the report brought up serious health and ethical concerns, and all of the parents questioned said they would never give food products from cloned animals to their own children. Last month research by the Food Standards Agency indicated consumers were worried about the impact the technology had on animals and questioned what benefits there were.

Mrs Van Tichelen added: "Consumers in neither America nor Europe want to have food products from clones or their offspring, so why introduce it in the first place? People are rightly concerned about this practice being forced on them. Conventional methods work, so there is no need to approve cloning which would cause so many animals to suffer and die."

Eurogroup for Animals is leading a coalition to prevent cloning for food being approved in the European Union. The coalition includes organisations representing anything from farmers, to scientists, consumers and environmentalists.

Later this year the results of a Eurobarometer survey on people's attitudes on food products from cloned animals will be published. The Commission will base any proposals on cloning on the reports by EFSA and the European Group on Ethics, as well as the results of the Eurobarometer.

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