EU consumers have little appetite for cloning

Camille Perrin
Senior Food Policy Officer

European Parliament
Hearing on Animal Cloning for Food Supply
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BEUC in a nutshell

• The European Consumer Organisation

• Umbrella organisation for 40 strong national consumer organisations, from 31 European countries

• Mission = to promote consumer interests in EU decision making

• Among our work priorities: “Safe and healthy food for informed consumers”
Europeans’ attitudes toward animal cloning ...

- Two Eurobarometer surveys (2008 & 2010) found EU consumers **overwhelmingly disapprove of cloning for food supply**
  - **84%** had concerns over long-term effects on nature
  - **58%** found cloning totally unacceptable for food production (2008) (**figure hiked to 67% in 2010**)
  - **2/3** agreed there are ethical grounds for rejecting animal cloning
  - **69%** agreed cloning would risk treating animals as commodities
  - **83%** said they would want food from clones’ offspring to be labelled if it were to become available in EU supermarkets
International Food Information Council, 2007
- **53%** of Americans **unlikely to buy** meat, milk and eggs from cloned animals even if FDA determines such products are safe (**51% for food from offspring**)

Consumers Union, 2007
- **89%** of US consumers want meat and milk derived from cloned animals to be labelled
- **69%** of US consumers are concerned about eating milk or meat from cloned animals

Opinion Research Corporation for American Anti-Vivisection Society, 2006
- **66%** **disapprove of cloning for food** (only 27% approved of it)
- **46%** have **ethical or moral objections** to cloning animals for food

Center for Food, Nutrition, and Agricultural Policy, 2006
- **66%** of Americans **uncomfortable using cloning** techniques to reproduce animals

... and they are not the only ones
Livestock cloning globally

• No commercial cloning of livestock animals in the EU and none expected before 2020 (source: ICF-GHK study)

• Commercial cloning concentrated in the **US, Canada and Argentina**. Some activity in New Zealand, Australia, Chile, China, Paraguay, Uruguay and South Korea (source: ICF-GHK study)
  - Cloning mostly applied to **beef and dairy cattle**
  - Also applied to porcine animals (US, China?, NZ?) but to a much lesser extent
  - Cloning of ovine and caprine animals largely uncommon (started in the US but at very small scale)
• Most third countries **do not regulate food from clones** – with a small exception:
  – **Canada** considers **food from clones and their progeny** as ‘novel food’ and requires **pre-market safety assessment**

• Third countries do not distinguish between clones and conventionally-bred animals but still:
  – **New-Zealand** has mandatory **identification and registration** system in place for clones (to cope with potential requests from foreign markets)
  – **Private initiatives** in Canada, US, Brazil

• **Traceability of reproductive material**:
  – **Individual identification already enabled** in the EU for all semen and embryos
  – Private sector agreements with US/Canada **already identify clone reproductive material**

• In the EU, individual traceability for bovine animals, sheep and goats. Pigs traceable on a batch basis.
Traceability of clones (II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Association</th>
<th>Rules</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEEF</td>
<td>Register Clone status in Pedigree</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Angus Association</td>
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<td>Beefmaster Breeders United</td>
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<td>American Akaushi Association</td>
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<td>DAIRY</td>
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<td>Holstein Association, USA Inc.</td>
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<td>American Guernsey Association</td>
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<td>American Jersey Cattle Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brown Swiss Cattle Breeder’s Association of the U.S.A., Inc.</td>
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Source: Comments from Jaydee Hanson, Senior Policy Analyst for Cloning and Genetically Engineered Animals To National Organic Program, US Department of Agriculture September 20, 2011
EU consumers expectations not met by EC 2013 proposals

• Today in the EU: food from clones has ‘novel food’ status and requires pre-market approval.

→ No specific rules apply for food from cloned animals’ offspring and descendants, which can be sold unwittingly to consumers.

• EC proposals of December 2013 disappointing for consumers:
  – Consumers will remain in the dark regarding food from clones’ offspring and descendants
  – Consumers’ ethical concerns disregarded
  – Cloned animals anyway not meant for food but for reproduction, unlike their progeny
Trade aspects of cloning

- According to EC impact assessment:
  - Imports of live animals < 0.01% of EU’s livestock
  - Imports of (mostly bovine) reproductive material account for 2.5% on average of EU’s use of reproductive material
  - EU imports of meat and dairy products also relatively low (<5%), except for sheep and goat meat (20%, essentially from New Zealand) but cloning uncommon for these species

→ Tracking imported live clones and imported clone reproductive material would be feasible in the EU

- Concerns voiced by EU trading partners
  - Impact of CETA and TTIP trade negotiations?
• Consumers should be able to make informed choices when it comes to purchasing and consuming food derived from cloned animals’ progeny.

• As the minimum, we wish to see:
  – a **ban on animal cloning** in the EU for food production; on **food from cloned animals; on imports of clones into the EU** for food production;
  – a **traceability system for semen and embryos** from cloned animals and for the **live offspring of cloned animals**;
  – **labelling requirements** for fresh meat of cloned animals’ offspring
Pressure from its trading partners should not prevent the EU from adopting rules on cloning in line with its citizens’ demand.

2011 leaked opinion from Council legal services revealed labelling requirements for food from cloned animals’ offspring could be compatible with WTO and GATT rules.

Rather than an obstacle, TTIP should be the opportunity for the EU and the US to adopt rules on animal cloning for food in the interest of consumers on both sides of the Atlantic:

- Both EU and US consumer groups have long called for mandatory labelling and traceability of clones and their progeny to allow for informed consumer food choices (TACD resolution).
Useful references


• [http://www.euractiv.com/cap/cloning-news-504753]

Thank you

BEUC

The European Consumer Organisation

The Consumer Voice in Europe

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