

---

## Q&A on the novel foods regulation

**On 29 March the final conciliation meeting on updates to novel foods rules failed after Council rejected a final compromise offer from the European Parliament. This means that the current Novel Foods Regulation, adopted in 1997, will remain in force. This is only the second case in which conciliation talks have not resulted in an agreement (the first was those on the working time directive).**

The updates to novel foods rules aimed to ensure that innovation can continue in the food sector without compromising safety and consumer protection. The following questions and answers outline the European Parliament's role and some of the controversial issues at stake.

### Contacts

---

Christopher COAKLEY

☎ (+32) 2 28 44859 (BXL)

☎ (+33) 3 881 76853 (STR)

☎ (+32) 498 98 33 26

✉ [envi-press@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:envi-press@europarl.europa.eu)

---

## What are "novel foods"?

# What is the status of the update to novel foods rules?

In January 2008, the European Commission presented a proposal to update novel foods rules. The European Parliament and Council did not reach agreement on a final text after two "readings" (phases of discussion and voting) and a period of "conciliation talks". The main stumbling block was the question of food from cloned animals. Since negotiations did not end in agreement before the end March 2011 deadline, this legislative process has ended and the 1997 Novel Foods Regulation remains in force without any changes. In October 2010, the Commission indicated it favoured a temporary suspension of animal cloning for food production in the EU and would begin the process to propose legislation to that effect.

### Further information

[Further information on conciliation procedures](#)

# Who is representing the Parliament in negotiations?

**Further information**

[The full list of participants](#)

# What is the European Parliament position on food from clones?

# What do EU consumers think about food from clones?

## Further information

[Eurobarometer analytical report](#)

## What are the objections to meat from cloned animals (or their descendents)?

# Is the sale of food from cloned animals allowed in the EU?

Under the novel foods regulation already in force, the sale of food from cloned animals (but not of its offspring or descendants) would require an authorisation. No application for clones has so far been submitted. Cloned animals are expensive to produce, and therefore currently present a commercial interest more for breeding purposes than for meat. In August 2010, meat from a bull bred in the UK from a cloned cow was sold and consumed.

Traceability in the global food and agriculture market is also an issue. Animal semen and embryos for breeding are traded internationally. A United States voluntary moratorium currently applies to the sale of food from clones, but not from their offspring. The US Food and Drug Administration has not introduced any labelling requirements for such products.



## Why is nanotechnology relevant to food?

# What measures do MEPs want on nanotechnology?