



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

2013/2091(INI)

25.11.2013

OPINION

of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

on the food crisis, fraud in the food chain and control thereof
(2013/2091(INI))

Rapporteur: Ulrike Rodust

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that consumer confidence in the safety of food in the EU has been undermined by instances of fraud in the food chain which have impacted negatively on the whole food chain, from producers through to consumers; notes that consumer confidence has to be restored; believes that in this context short supply chains (local and regional) can guarantee more transparency and can replace the long and complicated supply chains which played a major role in the food fraud crisis;
2. Calls on the Commission to put forward legislative proposals, pursuant to Regulation 1151/2012 (Quality Products), for a 'local marketing and direct sales' label to help promote the markets concerned and help farmers add value to their produce;
3. Notes that food fraud has the potential to undermine the significant work undertaken at both national and EU level in strengthening and modernising health and safety and quality controls in the food chain, and to damage the reputation of European foodstuffs;
4. Points out that a clear, legally valid EU-wide definition of food fraud is essential in order to facilitate the effective combating of fraud in the food chain;
5. Emphasises that, given the nature of the EU single market, food fraud extends in many cases beyond Member States' borders and becomes a threat to the health of all European citizens;
6. Points out that standard EU-wide quality requirements for food control, in accordance with Regulation No 178/2002, are essential, and that the observance and enforcement of EU rules depend on the Member States carrying out official control activities;
7. Notes that concentration of the wholesale and retail trade encourages unscrupulous practices in the food supply chain;
8. Calls on the Member States to review their criminal law on food fraud in order to ensure that the severity of sentences is effective, proportionate and dissuasive in relation to the illegal profits that can be generated through fraud, and to provide tougher sentences that act as a deterrent, where necessary;
9. Points out that direct, enhanced cooperation between Member States' competent bodies when food fraud is suspected or confirmed is of vital importance for the tracing and investigation of the fraud;
10. Notes that it is crucial that existing legislation is properly applied and enforced; proposes that information about products and manufacturers found in breach of European food law should be made available to consumers at the earliest possible opportunity, and invites the Commission to draw up rules in this area; recommends, furthermore, greater sharing of information and pooling of resources between competent authorities, which have to be

clearly identified, and police forces at national and EU level, in order to investigate and uncover fraudulent practices and enhance consumer confidence;

11. Recommends the introduction of an obligation for all research laboratories and their staff to notify the competent supervisory authorities of the results of all food and feed tests that suggest fraud may have occurred or are relevant to combating fraud;
12. Stresses that clear and comprehensive mandatory origin labelling is vital and can contribute to combating food fraud by fostering greater transparency along the food supply chain; calls on the Commission to put forward, as soon as possible, legislative proposals to improve traceability in the food chain by making meat labelling mandatory;
13. Welcomes the provisions in the new Food Information to Consumers Law which provides for mandatory place of origin labelling for beef, pigmeat, poultrymeat and sheepmeat; calls on the Commission to put forward, as soon as possible, legislative proposals to improve traceability in the food chain by introducing mandatory labelling for those meat products specifying place of birth, place of rearing and place of slaughter where those places are different; calls, in addition, for legislative proposals on mandatory place of origin labelling for milk and milk products, unprocessed foods, meat used as an ingredient, single-ingredient products, and ingredients representing more than 50% of a food product;
14. Emphasises the need for traceability, control, and due diligence on the part of retailers in order to safeguard long supply chains and ensure that consumers do not become the unwitting victims of fraud;
15. Calls for the extension of current traceability regimes and for the systematic implementation of the 'step-free' traceability provided for in basic Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 covering food and feed, food-producing animals, and all other substances destined for this purpose or which can be expected to be used in the production of food or feed; calls for the entire food chain in Europe, including all stages of production, processing and sales and distribution, to be transparent and fully open to scrutiny by inspectors in order to ensure that fraudulent food products can be quickly identified;
16. Calls for legal protection for whistleblowers working in the food industry who report abuses to the authorities.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	25.11.2013
Result of final vote	+: 25 -: 2 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	John Stuart Agnew, José Bové, Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, Paolo De Castro, Hynek Fajmon, Iratxe García Pérez, Julie Girling, Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto, Elisabeth Jeggle, Jarosław Kalinowski, Elisabeth Köstinger, Agnès Le Brun, Gabriel Mato Adrover, Mairead McGuinness, Marit Paulsen, Ulrike Rodust, Alfreds Rubiks, Giancarlo Scottà, Alyn Smith, Ewald Stadler, Csaba Sándor Tabajdi, Marc Tarabella
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Karin Kadenbach, Giovanni La Via, Anthea McIntyre, Maria do Céu Patrão Neves, Dimitar Stoyanov