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REPORT

on the proposal for a Council regulation on the marketing of the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less
(COM(2006)0487 – C6-0330/2006 – 2006/0162(CNS))

Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

Rapporteur: Bernadette Bourzai

Symbols for procedures

- * Consultation procedure
majority of the votes cast
- **I Cooperation procedure (first reading)
majority of the votes cast
- **II Cooperation procedure (second reading)
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position
majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend
the common position*
- *** Assent procedure
*majority of Parliament's component Members except in cases
covered by Articles 105, 107, 161 and 300 of the EC Treaty and
Article 7 of the EU Treaty*
- ***I Codecision procedure (first reading)
majority of the votes cast
- ***II Codecision procedure (second reading)
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position
majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend
the common position*
- ***III Codecision procedure (third reading)
majority of the votes cast, to approve the joint text

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the Commission.)

Amendments to a legislative text

In amendments by Parliament, amended text is highlighted in ***bold italics***. Highlighting in *normal italics* is an indication for the relevant departments showing parts of the legislative text for which a correction is proposed, to assist preparation of the final text (for instance, obvious errors or omissions in a given language version). These suggested corrections are subject to the agreement of the departments concerned.

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DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

**on the proposal for a Council regulation on the marketing of the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less
(COM(2006)0487 – C6-0330/2006 – 2006/0162(CNS))**

(Consultation procedure)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission proposal to the Council (COM(2006)0487)¹,
 - having regard to Article 37(2) of the EC Treaty, pursuant to which the Council consulted Parliament (C6-0330/2006),
 - having regard to Rule 51 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (A6-0006/2007),
1. Approves the Commission proposal as amended;
 2. Calls on the Commission to alter its proposal accordingly, pursuant to Article 250(2) of the EC Treaty;
 3. Calls on the Council to notify Parliament if it intends to depart from the text approved by Parliament;
 4. Asks the Council to consult Parliament again if it intends to amend the Commission proposal substantially;
 5. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council and Commission.

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendments by Parliament

Amendment 1 Recital 5

(5) To improve the functioning of the single market, the marketing of the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less should be organised in such a way as to make it as transparent as possible. This will also enable such production to be better

(5) To improve the functioning of the single market, the marketing of the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less should be organised in such a way as to make it as transparent as possible. This will also enable such production to be better

¹ Not yet published in OJ.

organised. For that purpose, the sales descriptions to be used in each language of the Member States for the marketing of the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less should be specified. This will also improve information for consumers.

organised. For that purpose, the sales descriptions to be used in each language of the Member States for the marketing of the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less, ***or meat preparations obtained therefrom, intended for human consumption***, should be specified. This will also improve information for consumers.

Amendment 2
Recital 12

(12) Provision should also be made for the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less to be identified by a letter representing the category to which they belong, and the age on slaughter to be indicated on the labels attached to such meat.

(12) Provision should also be made for the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less to be identified by a letter representing the category to which they belong, ***by their sales description*** and ***by*** the age on slaughter to be indicated on the labels attached to such meat. ***These indications should also appear in the commercial documents.***

Justification

In the interests of clarity, it is necessary for meat labels and commercial documents to contain the following information: identifying letter, sales description and age on slaughter.

Amendment 3
Recital 13

(13) Traders wishing to supplement the sales descriptions provided for in this Regulation by other voluntary information should be able to do so in accordance with the procedure provided for in Articles 16 or 17 of Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 July 2000 establishing a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals and regarding the labelling of beef and beef products and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 820/97.

(13) Traders wishing to supplement the sales descriptions provided for in this Regulation by other voluntary information, ***for example the type of feed used***, should be able to do so in accordance with the procedure provided for in Articles 16 or 17 of Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 July 2000 establishing a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals and regarding the labelling of beef and beef products and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 820/97.

Amendment 4
Recital 14

(14) To ensure correct use of the information on the labelling in accordance with this Regulation, the data enabling the correctness of the information on the labelling to be verified should be recorded at all stages of production and marketing.

(14) To ensure correct use of the information on the labelling in accordance with this Regulation, the data enabling the correctness of the information on the labelling to be verified should be recorded at all stages of production and marketing.
However, some of this information need not be supplied at the stage when the product is supplied to the final consumer.

Amendment 5
Recital 15 a (new)

(15a) The Member States should lay down the system of penalties applicable to infringements of the provisions of this Regulation and ensure that they are implemented. The penalties should be proportionate, but sufficiently dissuasive. They could range from the re-labelling or return of products to their complete destruction.

Amendment 6
Article 1, paragraph 1, subparagraph 2

It shall apply to the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less produced in the Community or imported from third countries.

It shall apply to the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less, ***slaughtered after ... ****, ***whether the meat is*** produced in the Community or imported from third countries.

**** Date of entry into force of this Regulation***

Amendment 7
Article 1, paragraph 2

2. This Regulation shall apply without prejudice to Council Regulation (*EEC*) No *1208/81*.

2. This Regulation shall apply without prejudice to Council Regulation (*EC*) No *1183/2006 of 24 July 2006 concerning the Community scale for the classification of carcasses of adult bovine animals*¹.

¹ *OJ L 214, 4.8.2006, p. 1*

Amendment 8
Article 1, paragraph 3

3. This Regulation shall not apply to the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less for which a protected designation of origin or geographical indication *has been* registered in accordance with Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006.

3. This Regulation shall not apply to the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less for which a protected designation of origin or geographical indication *is* registered in accordance with Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006.

Justification

The framework for future designations of origin or geographical indications must be clarified.

Amendment 9
Article 2

For the purposes of this Regulation, “meat” means all carcasses, meat on the bone or boned, and offal, whether or not cut, obtained from bovine animals aged twelve months or less, presented fresh, frozen or deep-frozen, whether or not wrapped or packed.

For the purposes of this Regulation, “meat” means all carcasses, meat on the bone or boned, and offal, whether or not cut, *intended for human consumption*, obtained from bovine animals aged twelve months or less, presented fresh, frozen or deep-frozen, whether or not wrapped or packed. *The provisions of this Regulation shall also apply to prepared, processed or cooked products which contain meat.*

Amendment 10

Article 3

On slaughter, all bovine animals aged twelve months or less shall be classified by the operators, under the control of the competent authority referred to in Article 8(1), in one of the categories listed in Annex I.

On slaughter, all bovine animals aged twelve months or less shall be classified by the operators, under the control of the competent authority referred to in Article 8(1), in one of the categories listed in Annex I. ***Member States shall take the necessary measures to ensure compliance therewith.***

Justification

New measures should not be implemented; instead, the same provisions could be used as those set out in Article 16 of Regulation 1760/2000 applying to additional labelling.

Amendment 11

Article 4, paragraph 1, subparagraph 1

The meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less shall only be marketed in the various Member States under the sales description(s) listed in Annex II laid down for each Member State.

The meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less shall only be marketed in the various Member States under the sales description(s) listed in Annex II laid down for each Member State. ***The description shall appear in all commercial documents.***

Amendment 12

Article 4, paragraph 2 a (new)

2a. This regulation shall only apply where the meat of bovine animals aged more than eight months is being marketed as other than "beef" (or the equivalent term for adult beef in other Community languages).

Justification

In some Member States, bovine animals of some breeds are reared to adulthood quickly in order to maximise meat quality. In some cases the animals are marginally under 12 months at slaughter, which would mean that they are not covered by this proposal. However, the meat from these animals is clearly adult beef, since it does not share the characteristics of "pink veal" or "white/milk-fed veal". Since the meat is adult beef, it should be labelled as "beef" and it should be covered by the labelling and traceability rules for adult beef and not by the special rules for veal.

Amendment 13

Article 5, paragraph 1, introductory part

Without prejudice to Article 3(1) of Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Articles 13, 14 and 15 of Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000, **at each stage of production and marketing**, traders shall label the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less with the following information:

Without prejudice to Article 3(1) of Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Articles 13, 14 and 15 of Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000, traders shall label the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less with the following information:

Amendment 14

Article 5, paragraph 1, point (a)

(a) the category identification letter as defined in Annex I to this Regulation,

(a) the category identification letter as defined in Annex I to this Regulation, **at each stage of production and marketing except at the stage when the product is supplied to the final consumer;**

Amendment 15

Article 5, paragraph 1, point (b)

(b) the sales description in accordance with Article 4 of this Regulation,

(b) the sales description in accordance with Article 4 of this Regulation, **at each stage of production and marketing,**

Amendment 16

Article 5, paragraph 1 a (new)

1a. The information referred to in paragraph 1, points (a), (b) and (c), shall also appear in all commercial documents.

Amendment 17

Article 5, paragraph 2, subparagraph 2

They may not make an indication of the information referred to in paragraph 1(a) compulsory unless it is ensured that the purchaser is provided with the correct information.

deleted

Amendment 18
Article 7, paragraph 2, point (a)

(a) an indication of the identification number and the date of birth of the animals;

(a) an indication of the identification number and the date of birth of the animals, ***solely at the slaughterhouse level***;

Amendment 19
Article 8, paragraph 1

1. Before ***[1 July 2007]*** Member States shall designate the competent authority or authorities responsible for checks relating to the application of this Regulation and inform the Commission thereof.

1. Before ...*, Member States shall designate the competent authority or authorities responsible for ***official*** checks relating to the application of this Regulation and inform the Commission thereof.

**** Date of entry into force of this Regulation***

Amendment 20
Article 9 a (new)

Article 9a

Penalties

Member States shall lay down the system of penalties to be applied where checks carried out reveal a failure to comply with the conditions laid down in this Regulation. The penalties must be effective, proportionate and dissuasive. Member States shall notify the Commission of those provisions not later than ...* and shall notify it without delay of any subsequent amendments thereto.

****Twelve months from the date of entry into force of this Regulation***

Amendment 21
Article 10, paragraph 2

2. Amendments may be made to Annexes I and II in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 43(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1254/1999. *deleted*

Amendment 22
Annex I, point (A)

- | | | | |
|-----|--|-----|--|
| (A) | Category <i>X</i> : bovine animals aged eight months or less | (A) | Category <i>V</i> : bovine animals aged eight months or less |
| | Category identification letter: <i>X</i> ; | | Category identification letter: <i>V</i> ; |

Justification

The choice of the letters X and Y may lead to confusion with the sex of the animals. The letters V and Z should therefore be used instead.

Amendment 23
Annex I, point (B)

- | | | | |
|-----|--|-----|--|
| (B) | Category <i>Y</i> : bovine animals aged more than eight months but not more than twelve months | (B) | Category <i>Z</i> : bovine animals aged more than eight months but not more than twelve months |
| | Category identification letter: <i>Y</i> . | | Category identification letter: <i>Z</i> . |

Amendment 24
Annex II, point (A), introductory part

- | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|---|
| (A) | For the meat of bovine animals in category <i>X</i> : | (A) | For the meat of bovine animals in category <i>V</i> : |
|-----|---|-----|---|

Amendment 25
Annex II, point (B), introductory part

(B) For the meat of bovine animals in category *Y*:

(B) For the meat of bovine animals in category *Z*:

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

What is meant by a calf?

Everyone would agree that a calf is a young bovine animal. The answer is evident where the live animal is concerned, but much less evident where calf meat (veal) is concerned and when the feed used and the age at which animals are slaughtered are taken into account, given that livestock rearing systems and consumption patterns vary widely between Member States.

In some countries, for example France, calves are mainly fed on milk and milk products and, if an animal is slaughtered above the age of six months, the meat is no longer referred to as 'veal', but rather as 'young bovine animal' meat. In other countries, such as Spain, the animals are almost exclusively fed on cereals, supplemented with fodder, and the term 'veal' ('ternera') may be used up to the age of 14 months.

Basically, there are two major groups of countries within the EU:

- those, the majority (almost all of the Member States, and especially France, Germany, Italy and Belgium), where the term 'veal' is used for the meat of animals slaughtered before the age of eight months and fed mainly on milk;
- those, a minority (above all Spain and Denmark), where this term continues to be used up to the age of 12, or even 14, months and where animals are fed on cereals.

In the Netherlands, Europe's second biggest producer of calf meat, the two branches exist in parallel, namely the 'white veal' sector, which represents the vast majority of production (around 85% of the total) and uses the first system of rearing, and the minority 'pink veal' sector, which emerged at the start of the 1980s and uses the second system.

At the same time, it should be noted that, in European legislation, it is the eight-month limit which is used in particular to determine the eligibility of animals for the slaughter premium (Article 130 of Regulation 1782/2003).

Why introduce a Commission proposal?

The feed used and the age at which animals are slaughtered have an effect on the characteristics of meat in terms of flavour, tenderness or colour.

A calf fed exclusively on milk is monogastric. Once it starts consuming fibrous feed (straw or hay), it becomes a ruminant. As milk does not provide iron - essential for producing red blood cells and giving colour to the meat - meat ranging in colour from white to pink may be produced, according to the extent to which other components are included in the feed.

'As a rule', as the Commission points out, 'no reference is made to the type of feed received by the animals or their age at the time of slaughter' and, given the way in which terms may be translated, traders and consumers often find themselves faced with very different products sold under the same description.

As the Commission points out, 'this practice could disturb trade and encourage unfair competition. Consequently it has a direct effect on the establishment and functioning of the single market.'

Furthermore, studies show that the term 'veal' is a sales description which adds to the value of a product and that it is being used by some traders in order to obtain a significantly higher market price when selling 'young bovine animal' meat with very different organoleptic characteristics.

Ex slaughterhouse there are price differences of 2 to 3 €/kg between meat obtained from young animals aged less than eight months and those aged between eight and 12 months. 'Gains' made are between 60 and 70%, and in some cases even as high as 100%, depending on the characteristics, the season and economic factors.

The veal situation in the EU

European production totalled just over 800 000 tonnes, carcass weight equivalent, in 2005. Some 85% of production is concentrated in just five Member States: France (30%), the Netherlands (25%), Italy (18%) and Belgium and Germany (respectively 6%).

Consumption is even more concentrated, with France and Italy alone accounting for nearly 70% of European consumption of veal. According to OFIVAL estimates, per capita consumption of veal in 2005 in France was 4.53 kg and in Italy 3.87 kg, compared with a figure for the EU-25 as a whole of only 1.70 kg (1.98 kg for the EU-15).

There is at present relatively little trade with third countries, although the potential exists.

Trade within the EU is virtually confined to exports from the Netherlands, amounting to ± 200 000 tonnes a year. Italy is the main market for Dutch exports, taking 43.2 % of the total in 2005, followed by Germany and France, accounting for 20.5 % and 19.7 % respectively. Whilst France also exports a certain amount, mainly to the Italian market, its exports are relatively modest and irregular.

Commission proposal

The Commission drew up its proposal in response to calls from a number of Member States and the European beef and veal sector for clearer rules.

The Commission is proposing that precise sales descriptions be laid down according to the age at which an animal is slaughtered. This is regarded as a sufficient criterion, compliance with which is easier to monitor than is the case with the feed used. The Commission is proposing the introduction of two categories and the use of a letter to identify them: X for animals slaughtered up to the age of eight months and Y for animals slaughtered between the ages of nine and 12 months. For the first category, the sales description 'veal' is to continue to be used. For the second category, different terms are to be used ('jeune bovin', 'vitellone', 'jungrindfleisch', etc.) except on the domestic market in four countries (Denmark, Greece, Spain and the Netherlands), where, in order to take account of customs and cultural traditions, the term 'veal' may continue to be used.

The term 'veal' or any other sales descriptions laid down in the proposal may no longer be used in the labelling of meat obtained from animals aged more than 12 months.

Traders wishing to supplement the sales descriptions laid down in this proposal with other - optional - information will be permitted to do so.

For reasons of consistency, and in order to avoid any risk of distortion of competition, meat imported from third countries must also be subject to the provisions of this proposal for a regulation.

Rapporteur's position

For many years efforts have been made to find a way of introducing EU-wide harmonised rules on the marketing of meat obtained from bovine animals aged 12 months or less. In France, initial work was done at the beginning of the 1990s; the BSE crisis put a stop to that work for a time and it was resumed at the start of the 2000s. Your rapporteur therefore welcomes the proposal by the Commission, which has done excellent work in this area in order to find an original, balanced solution.

Harmonisation is essential in order to put an end to a situation that is leading to distortion of competition and also in order to prevent the market from becoming fragmented as a result of measures taken at national level, such as the Italian decree aimed at limiting the use of the term 'veal' to meat obtained from animals aged less than eight months with a maximum carcass weight of 185 kg. The measure in question was suspended after the Commission put forward its proposal, but it is perfectly possible that, if the proposal fails to be adopted, similar initiatives could emerge.

Whilst the objective is to give priority to the sales descriptions that apply in consumer countries, your rapporteur approves the Commission's decision to exclude geographical indications and designations of origin from the scope of the regulation, enabling these very typical products, to which specific requirements apply, to continue to use their own sales description everywhere. Your rapporteur also welcomes the fact that traders are being allowed to supplement information on labels, which gives them the option of providing any additional information that they consider adds to the value of their products, for example the type of feed used.

However, a number of points need to be clarified. In your rapporteur's view, the main gap in the proposal is the failure to provide for a system of penalties. A provision should therefore be laid down allowing the Member States to impose proportionate and dissuasive penalties in the event of failure to comply with the rules laid down.

The Commission proposal is the result of a delicate compromise which it has taken a long time to reach. It is therefore essential to see to it that any further derogation that could lead to the whole proposal becoming unravelled is ruled out.

PROCEDURE

Title	Proposal for a Council regulation on the marketing of the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less
References	COM(2006)0487 – C6-0330/2006 – 2006/0162(CNS)
Date submitted to Parliament	5.10.2006
Committee responsible Date authorisation announced in plenary	AGRI 12.10.2006
Committee(s) asked for opinion(s) Date announced in plenary	ENVI 12.10.2006
Not delivering opinion(s) Date of decision	ENVI 3.10.2006
Rapporteur(s) Date appointed	Bernadette Bourzai 3.10.2006
Discussed in committee	21.11.2006 18.12.2006 24.1.2007
Date adopted	24.1.2007
Result of final vote	+: 38 -: - 0: -
Members present for the final vote	Katerina Batzeli, Thijs Berman, Niels Busk, Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, Dumitru Gheorghe Mircea Coșea, Joseph Daul, Albert Deß, Carmen Fraga Estévez, Lutz Goepel, Bogdan Golik, Friedrich-Wilhelm Graefe zu Baringdorf, Elisabeth Jeggle, Heinz Kindermann, Albert Jan Maat, Diamanto Manolakou, Mairead McGuinness, Rosa Miguélez Ramos, Neil Parish, Radu Podgorean, María Isabel Salinas García, Agnes Schierhuber, Willem Schuth, Czesław Adam Siekierski, Brian Simpson, Csaba Sándor Tabajdi, Marc Tarabella, Witold Tomczak, Kyösti Virrankoski, Andrzej Tomasz Zapalowski, Janusz Wojciechowski
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Bernadette Bourzai, Hynek Fajmon, Gábor Harangozó, Zdzisław Zbigniew Podkański, Armando Veneto
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	Reimer Böge, Jorgo Chatzimarkakis, Wiesław Stefan Kuc
Date tabled	25.1.2007
Comments (available in one language only)	...