

20 July 1999

B5-0017/99

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Council and Commission statements

pursuant to Rule 37 of the Rules of Procedure

by the following Members:

Mulder, De Clercq, Ducarme, Sterckx, Beysen, Ries, Nicholson and Maaten

on behalf of the ELDR Group

on dioxin contamination in foodstuffs and the subsequent ban on the sale of certain products

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PE 279.917
Or. en

B5-0017/99**Resolution on dioxin contamination in foodstuffs and the subsequent ban on the sale of certain products**The European Parliament,

- A. whereas a chemical analysis of animal feed, chicken and eggs in Belgium revealed a high level of dioxin (PCDD) on 26 April 1999,
- B. whereas the results of the chemical analysis were not communicated to the Commission until 27 May 1999,
- C. whereas the contaminated fat had been sold to animal feed producers in several other Member States,
- D. whereas the Commission took the decision on 2 June 1999 to exclude potentially contaminated eggs and poultry from the market; whereas the ban was subsequently extended to include beef, pork and certain milk products,
 - 1. Recalls that in a Single Market unburdened by border controls, the competent authorities and producers of the exporting Member State retain exclusive authority for ensuring that foodstuffs fulfil EU food safety requirements;
 - 2. Notes that the relevant Member State authorities have both a legal and a moral obligation to inform their EU partners of any real or potential food safety risk;
 - 3. Is severely critical of the decision of the Government in office in Belgium at the time not to immediately inform the Commission and the Member States of the results of the chemical analysis of 26 April;
 - 4. Welcomes the decision by the recently formed Government in Belgium to appoint a special investigator to look into the dioxin affair;
 - 5. Notes that the ensuing food scare has further reduced public confidence in the ability of the EU to guarantee food quality and standards;
 - 6. Notes the Commission decision to initiate legal proceedings against the Government in office in Belgium at the time for failing to apply the provisions of two EU food safety directives (failure to immediately inform the EU partners about the contamination and the initial application of emergency measures on withdrawing food from distribution);
 - 7. Reiterates its support for the long-standing Commission proposal to allow EU inspectors to carry out spot checks for contaminated animal feed whenever they wish and not just in emergency cases as is currently the situation; calls therefore on the Council to finally adopt the necessary legislation;
 - 8. Is of the opinion that the dioxin scandal is yet another illustration of the need for an EU quality label to reassure consumers about the quality and safety of food on sale in the

Member States as set out in its resolution of 9 October 1998⁽¹⁾; regrets that this parliamentary initiative has not been followed by any proposed legislation from the Commission;

9. Notes the importance of properly labelling animal feed in order to assist farmers in choosing the best products for their livestock;
10. Calls on the Commission to present a paper outlining both the advantages and disadvantages of a Food and Drug Administration body in the EU and whether it believes the Veterinary Office in Dublin could fulfil such a role;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the Governments of the Member States.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 328, 26.10.1998, p. 232.