



Plenary sitting

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PROPOSAL FOR A UNION ACT

submitted under Rule 47(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the need to amend EU legislation to address the problems facing livestock farms as a result of bovine tuberculosis

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Proposal for a Union act on the need to amend EU legislation to address the problems facing livestock farms as a result of bovine tuberculosis

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union,
 - having regard to Article 225 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
 - having regard to Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health (‘Animal Health Law’),
 - having regard to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/688 of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as regards animal health requirements for movements within the Union of terrestrial animals and hatching eggs,
 - having regard to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 as regards rules for surveillance, eradication programmes, and disease-free status for certain listed and emerging diseases,
 - having regard to Rule 47(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas EU legislation states that for a territory or zone to qualify as officially free from tuberculosis, it must have a target prevalence rate of 0.2%, which means that 99.8% of establishments, representing 99.9% of the bovine population, must be free from tuberculosis, and the new infection rate must not have exceeded 0.1% during the past three years;
- B. whereas the Commission proposes 2030 as the deadline for the Member States to reach these targets across their territories;
- C. whereas many Member States have a high number of livestock farms whose farm model is based on outdoor breeding;
- D. whereas extensive outdoor livestock farming models have shown that there is constant interaction between cattle and wild animals that carry tuberculosis;
- E. whereas the mycobacteria that cause tuberculosis can survive for some time in the environment; whereas that ability to survive is key to understanding indirect transmission and survival of the pathogen in complex environments, with a multitude of host species;
- F. whereas extensive livestock farming is a way of life and an activity that helps to preserve rural areas by maintaining the population, resolving in part the problems caused by the depopulation of rural areas throughout Europe; whereas, like any other economic activity, it needs to be able to make sustainable profits in the long term;

- G. whereas the Union should work for the sustainable development of Europe based on balanced economic growth, price stability and a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress;
- H. whereas the amendments contained in this act eliminate all risks to health and food safety; whereas European cofinancing for eradication campaigns beyond 2023 is not currently guaranteed;
1. Notes that it is impossible to eradicate bovine tuberculosis, under the terms laid down, where extensive livestock farming is predominant;
 2. Considers it essential to make progress on active disease control given the goal of eradicating tuberculosis in outdoor livestock farming in a way that does not require the animals to be immobilised or the activity suspended;
 3. Considers that extensive farms are more susceptible to further tuberculosis outbreaks, especially in areas with wild reservoirs, given that wild animals can act as a natural reservoir of *M. bovis* and transmit it to cattle;
 4. Deplores the fact that, after three decades of implementing tuberculosis eradication programmes in line with EU rules, the survival of farms is at risk as animals that have a positive or inconclusive result after a tuberculin skin test (SICTT) have to be put down, with a very low percentage being confirmed during post mortem examinations;
 5. Deplores the imposition of restrictions on livestock movements, leading to a suspension of business activities, such as the sale of breeding animals, and jeopardising the economic viability of many farms;
 6. Calls on the Commission to make immediate improvements to EU legislation on the rules for surveillance, eradication programmes and bovine tuberculosis-free status in the Member States, ensuring that food safety is compatible with the survival of farms;
 7. Calls on the Commission to introduce, at EU level, a standardised test to detect tuberculosis infection in live animals in order to avoid the slaughter of animals if analysis of the new in vivo test gives a negative result;
 8. Calls on the Commission to amend the rules in Regulation (EU) 2020/689 that require all animals on a farm to be immobilised following the slaughter of an animal testing positive in an immunological test, putting in place real and effective detection systems to ensure that cattle not affected by the disease are not immobilised or slaughtered;
 9. Calls on the Commission to remove paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Section 1 of Chapter 1 of Part II of Annex IV to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 as regards tests relating to movements of non-breeding animals, intended for subsequent slaughter in slaughterhouses, as the movement of such animals does not pose any health risk whatsoever;
 10. Calls on the Commission to renew and update the cofinancing arrangements for compensation for compulsory animal slaughter to 2030, with a view to achieving an economic balance for the loss of cattle to ensure that the profitability of outdoor livestock

farms is not undermined;

11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the governments and the parliaments of the Member States.