

Cloning for food: MEPs vote on plans to ban the practice

Should cloning for food be banned because of animal welfare concerns? On Tuesday 8 September MEPs debate and vote on amendments to a European Commission proposal to ban the cloning of farm animals in the EU. The MEPs in charge of steering the plans through Parliament support the ban, but want to add provisions on the offspring of cloned animals and the marketing of their products coming from countries outside the EU. Watch the debate live from 9.00 CET.

Current situation

In the EU food from clones currently needs a pre-market approval based on a scientific food safety assessment by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) before it can be put on the market

The parliamentary report

Not only does cloning raise questions about ethics and how it would affect people's health, scientific evidence also show that some animals suffer from poor health due to cloning. EFSA recognised animal health and welfare concerns due to mortality rates associated with the cloning technology in its 2008 opinion, which it later reconfirmed in statements made in 2009 and 2010.

Because of these reasons the report proposes to ban the practice for all farm animals. Food products from both clones and their offspring must be banned from the EU's food market. However, for this to work, mandatory traceability would be needed in order to track cloned animals, their offspring and any resulting products coming from countries outside the EU where cloning for food is allowed.

MEPs' views

Giulia Moi, who is dealing with the proposal on behalf of the agriculture committee, said the work on the parliamentary report had been guided by the need to protect both animals and people: "We didn't fall back on compromises such as the marketing and the opportunity to

introduce products derived from cloned animals and their descendants in the member states. Also, we have excluded the possibility that cloning of animals could become a common practice within the borders of the EU." However, she said they were aware the products of the offspring of cloned animals were being marketed in some countries the EU is trading with.

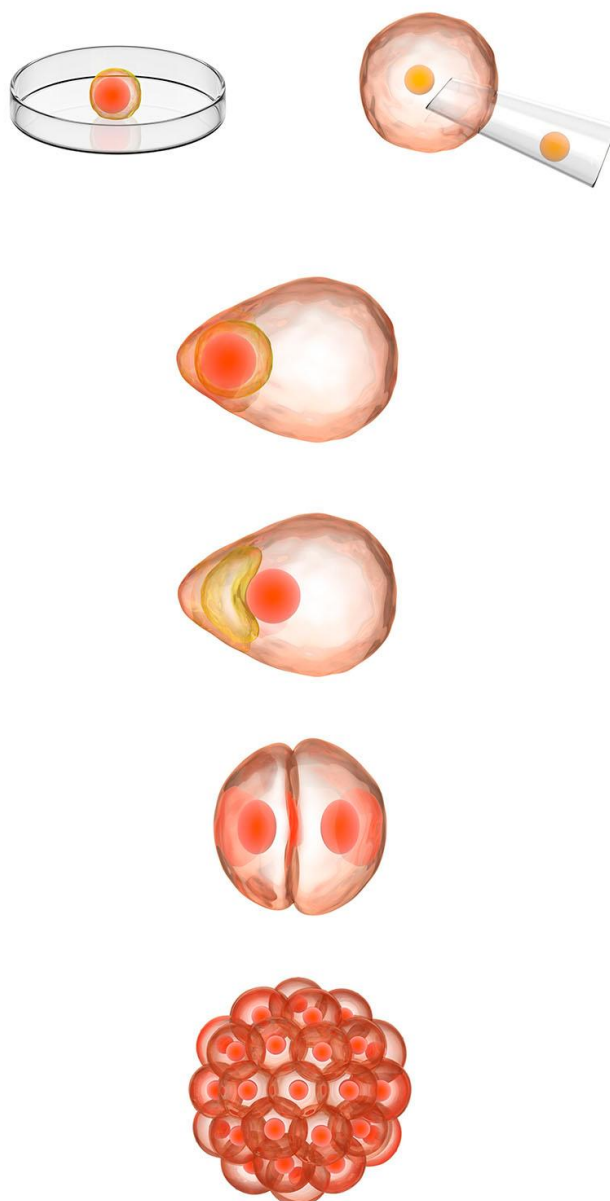
German EPP member Renate Sommer, who is dealing with the proposal on behalf of the environment committee, said: "Due to the negative effects on animal welfare, cloning for farming purposes is rejected by a large majority of consumers. Furthermore, we do not need cloning to ensure the meat supply in the EU. Prohibiting cloning is a matter of European values and principles. Consequently, the ban should not only include the clones themselves but also their reproductive material (semen and embryos), their descendants and any products derived thereof. This is necessary because, otherwise, we would promote the cloning technique in third countries."

Next steps

The proposal will need to be approved by both the Parliament and the Council before it can enter into force. Parliament votes on its position on Tuesday 8 September and the Council will adopt its position after that. At the earliest the legislation could enter into force in 2016. However, cloning would not be banned for other purposes, such as research, the conservation of rare breeds and endangered species or the use of animals for the production of pharmaceuticals and medical devices

Find out more

[Live: watch the debate on Tuesday 8 September from 9.00 CET](#)
[Commission's legislative proposal](#)
[Parliament's report](#)
[Procedure file](#)
[Eurobarometer survey on cloning](#)
[Cloning and novel food](#)
[Briefing on cloning](#)



The different stages of cloning an animal ©BELGA/SCIENCE



Cloned animals: would you eat them?

<http://www.europartv.europa.eu/en/player.aspx?pid=906c7a49-e497-487d-8611-a4b500de87b5>