

Brussels, 22 May 2008

Parliament calls for more focus on animal welfare

Eurogroup for Animals is urging the European Commission to take up the recommendations of a parliamentary report that asks for less livestock transport and limits on the size of farms as a way of reducing the risk of animal diseases spreading. The own initiative report by MEP Janusz Wojciechowski, which will strengthen the Commission's animal health strategy, was approved by European parliamentarians in Strasbourg today. They also voted in favour of an amendment asking to ban cloning for economic purposes.

The aim of the Commission's Animal Health Strategy 2007-2013 is to improve food safety, prevent the outbreak of diseases, and increase the welfare of animals. The report approved by Parliament today recognises that animal welfare is closely linked to animal health and human health, due to the risk of diseases spreading. It calls for measures such as more vaccination and minimal animal transport.

Sonja Van Tichelen, director Eurogroup for Animals, said: "It is great news that Parliament has adopted this report today, which will do so much to protect the health of both humans and animals. The Commission should listen to these democratically elected officials and incorporate the report's recommendations in its animal health action plan. High standards for animal welfare are key to ensuring good animal health.

"Major outbreaks of animal diseases such as Foot-and-Mouth disease can have catastrophic results, and we should do all we can to minimise the risk. Improving the welfare of animals by having smaller farms and less livestock transport will be a vital way of achieving this goal."

The Commission is likely to come up with an action plan with timetable this summer. Any legislative proposals will have to be agreed by Parliament too under the codecision procedure as they cover food safety and human health.

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For a copy of the report, click [here](#).

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Notes:

- Eurogroup for Animals represents animal welfare organisations in nearly each of the European member states. Since it was launched in 1980, the organisation has succeeded in encouraging the European Union to adopt higher legal standards of animal protection. For more information about Eurogroup, visit www.eurogroupforanimals.org.