

## **INFORMATION**

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**Brussels, 9 October 2008**

### **European consumers reject products from cloned animals**

Nearly six out of ten people in Europe (58%) feel that animal cloning for food production should never be justified, according to a Eurobarometer survey published today. In addition, 43% said they were “not at all likely” to buy food from cloned animals while 41% said they would not consider products from the offspring of cloned animals.

The survey was commissioned by the European Commission to help it decide whether it should approve the controversial practice within the EU.

Eurogroup for Animals has welcomed the survey and urges the Commission to propose a ban on animal cloning for food, which is a wasteful practice that causes animals to suffer at every stage. This should also include a ban on the import and marketing of products derived from it.

Sonja Van Tichelen, director of Eurogroup for Animals, said: “Our society does not need food from cloned animals, especially not when it leads to more animal suffering. Consumers want natural and healthy food, not Frankenstein food. We urge the Commission not to ignore these citizens’ concerns by ensuring cloning for food does not take place in the EU and those products will not be imported.”

Consumers should also have the right to choose what ends up on their plate, but as traceability is problematic for products from cloned animals, labelling is not an option.

The survey results are published just weeks after the European Parliament voted on 3 September with 622 votes in favour of a motion for resolution urging the Commission to prohibit cloning of animals for food and any products from cloned animals and their offspring.

Cloning for food should be banned across the globe as consumers everywhere have reservations about it. Research by the Food Standards Agency in Britain published in June indicated consumers were worried about the impact the technology had on animals and questioned what benefits there were. A Gallup poll found that more than 60% of Americans believe the practice is immoral, and a survey by the Consumers Union discovered 69% of Americans have concerns about meat and dairy products

from cloned animals in the food supply.

The European Food Safety Authority outlined grave concerns over the impact of cloning on animal welfare in its final opinion published on 24 July, while emphasising there are still too many uncertainties about the technology.

EU legislation also puts legal constraints on cloning for food as European Directive 98/58/EC states that “*natural or artificial breeding procedures which cause, or are likely to cause, suffering or injury to any of the animals concerned shall not be practiced (Annex, point 20)*”.

The Commission is expected to announce its decision within the coming months.

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*For more information or to receive a copy of the annual report call Steven Blaakman, senior press officer at Eurogroup, on 0032 (0)27400823 or email him on [s.blaakman@eurogroupforanimals.org](mailto:s.blaakman@eurogroupforanimals.org). Outside office hours please call 0032 (0)475 731066.*

Notes:

- Eurogroup for Animals represents animal welfare organisations in nearly each of the EU 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](http://www.eurogroupforanimals.org).
- The Eurobarometer was conducted among more than 25,000 randomly selected people from all 27 EU member states in July 2008.
- Cloned animals die younger and suffer more defects than normal animals. Many clones suffer from defects such as contracted tendons, respiratory failure, limb and head deformities, heart disease and kidney problems. Dolly the sheep, the first mammal cloned from an adult cell, had to be put down at the early age of six after developing arthritis and lung disease. According to research by the National Institute for Agricultural Research in France, clones of cows reach puberty 62 days later and 56 kilos heavier than normal cows.
- Cloning for food is being opposed in Europe by organisations such as Scientists for Global Responsibility, Friends of the Earth, Centre for Sustainable Alternatives, European Public Health Alliance, European Farmers Coordination, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, FARM, Biodynamic Agricultural Association, and Euro Coop, the European Association of Consumer Cooperatives.
- The European Group on Ethics said in its final opinion published on 11 January that it “does not see convincing arguments to justify the production of food from clones and their offspring”.