

## Statement on animal cloning for food production

The EU will soon be deciding whether or not to allow cloning of animals for food production. Eurogroup for Animals believes that cloning for food production is totally unacceptable and unnecessary, and is concerned that a decision will be taken without widespread public consultation and debate.

At present in Europe cloning is not a commercial practice and there is no specific regulation on the authorisation of food products from cloned animals for human consumption in the EU.

On the 14 January 2008, the European Commission adopted a proposal to revise the Novel Foods Regulation. The proposal foresees to include food products from cloned animals.

Eurogroup for Animals urges the EU to introduce an immediate ban on the cloning of animals for food production, and on the import and sale of cloned animals, their offsprings and food products from cloned animals and their offspring. This position is supported by a European Parliament resolution, an EFSA opinion, and EGE report and the results of a recent Eurobarometer. In addition Council Directive 98/58/EC concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes provides that 'natural or artificial breeding or breeding procedures which cause or are likely to cause suffering or injury to any of the animals concerned must not be practised' (Annex, paragraph 20).

### It is Eurogroup's view that:

1. The cloning process is **inefficient, wastes animals' lives and has a huge potential to cause pain, suffering and distress** at all stages of the process.
2. Farm animals are already seen by some as commodities rather than **sentient beings**. Cloning would compound this view, leading to less concern for animal welfare and less willingness to address welfare issues.
3. The routine use of cloning would **greatly reduce genetic diversity** within livestock populations, increasing the chances of whole herds being wiped out by disease to which they would all be equally susceptible.
4. The development of animal cloning as a method of food production is being **pursued without public consumer awareness** and in spite of well-documented public consumer concerns relating to the use of biotechnology in food production (eg GM foods).
5. Routine use of cloning technologies in animal farming would make farmers dependent on patented technologies owned by big companies, compromising food sovereignty.

### References

- **Banner Committee Report (1995)** Report of the Committee to consider the ethical implications of emerging technologies in the breeding of farm animals. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, HMSO London.
- **Pew Initiative (2002)** Biotech in the Barnyard: Implications of Genetically Engineered Animals. <http://pewagbiotech.org/research/proceedings/>
- **Pew Initiative (2005)** Exploring the Moral and Ethical Aspects of Genetically Engineered and Cloned Animals. <http://pewagbiotech.org/research/proceedings/>
- **FAWC (1998)** Report on the Implications of Cloning for the Welfare of Farmed Livestock. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, HMSO London.
- **European Parliament resolution** of 3 September 2008 **on the cloning of animals for food supply** <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P6-TA-2008-0400>
- **European Food Safety Authority's Scientific opinion** on Food Safety, Animal Health and Welfare and Environmental Impact of Animals derived from Cloning by Somatic Cell Nucleus Transfer (SCNT) and their Offspring and Products Obtained from those Animals [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/Scientific\\_Opinion/sc\\_op\\_ej767\\_animal\\_cloning\\_en.pdf?ssbinary=true](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/Scientific_Opinion/sc_op_ej767_animal_cloning_en.pdf?ssbinary=true)
- **The European Group of Ethics** in Science and New Technologies' **opinion on Ethical aspects of animal cloning for food supply** [http://ec.europa.eu/european\\_group\\_ethics/activities/docs/opinion23\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/european_group_ethics/activities/docs/opinion23_en.pdf)
- **Flash Eurobarometer on Europeans' attitudes towards animal cloning** [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/flash/fl\\_238\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_238_en.pdf)