



**Brussels, 3 March 2015**

**6668/15**

**PE 31  
AGRI 86**

**NOTE**

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from: General Secretariat of the Council  
to: Delegations

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Subject: Partial summary record of the meeting of the European Parliament  
Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) held on 23-24  
February 2015  
– Items 1, 6, 7 and 8 on the agenda

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***Item 1 on the agenda***

**Joint hearing with ENVI on "Cloning of animals for farming purposes"**

On 23 February, the ENVI and AGRI Committees of the European Parliament held a joint public hearing on issues related to the cloning of animals for farming purposes, in the presence of experts and senior officials. In the debate speakers of almost all political groups came out firmly against cloning for food production purposes, with some questioning the usefulness of further pursuing the debate on the issue.

In her introduction, the AGRI co-rapporteur, Ms MOI (EFDD, IT) asked that due account be taken of all possible consequences of the use of cloning techniques for farming and marketing purposes, which would be difficult given the lack of available scientific information. Another issue of major importance to her was to guarantee the highest level of animal welfare. The co-rapporteur for the ENVI Committee, Ms SOMMER (EPP, DE), explained that the EP's position during the discussions in 2008 was relatively clear - it was against cloning. She welcomed the fact that the Commission had decided to table separate proposals on novel foods and cloning but wondered at the same time whether cloning was at all necessary to remain competitive on the global market.

Juris ŠTĀLMEISTARS, Deputy Permanent Representative of Latvia to the EU, recalled the background to the proposals and referred to the failure to agree in conciliation talks in March 2011 on the novel foods proposal after more than three years of negotiations due to differences of opinion between the institutions on food derived from cloned animals and their offspring. This explained why the Commission had decided to table separate proposals on cloning and novel foods in 2013. Mr ŠTĀLMEISTARS stressed the importance of the ongoing work on novel foods and urged members not to miss the opportunity to agree on key novel food aspects. With regard to the proposals on cloning, he said that careful examination at technical level had started in the Council. Bearing in mind the very sensitive nature of the issue, he hoped to work for a balanced compromise that would be both pragmatic and technically feasible.

Vytėnis ANDRIUKAITIS, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, also mentioned the background to the proposals and acknowledged that cloning had to take into account a wide range of issues such as food safety, ethical questions, animal health and welfare, respect for genetic diversity, scientific research considerations, etc. With regard to the labelling of products from cloned animals and their offspring, he mentioned that the Commission had initiated a study in order to assess the feasibility and impact of a labelling scheme. The report was expected to be ready in October 2015.

Following the introductory statements experts gave various presentations. Some of these focused on the impact of cloning on the agri-food business operators and animal welfare, while others dealt with the scientific and ethical aspects and consumer perspectives of cloning.

In the discussion, most MEPs expressed their opposition to the use of cloning for farming purposes, several of them wondering what purpose was served in further pursuing the debate and proposing to drop future discussions entirely (Mr LOISEAU (NI, FR), Mr FERRAND (NI, FR), Ms MÜLLER (ALDE, DE), Ms HAZEKAMP (GUE/NGL, NL), Mr HÄUSLING (Greens/EFA, DE), Mr BOVÉ (Greens/EFA, FR), Mr ANDRIEU (S&D, FR), Ms SENRA RODRIGUEZ (GUE/NGL, ES), Ms GROSSETETE (EPP, FR), Mr ECK (GUE/NGL, DE)).

Several of the MEPs raised concerns with regard to the difficulty of labelling cloned food, the risk of reducing genetic diversity and the negative consequences of cloning for animal health and welfare (Mr LOISEAU, Ms HAZEKAMP, Ms AGUILERA GARCIA (S&D, ES), Mr ECK, Mr LIESE (EPP, DE)).

Other MEPs pointed to the fact that the central concern was linked less to food safety than to ethical questions (Ms AYUSO (EPP, ES), Mr BOGOVIČ (EPP, SI)).

With regard to the identification of offspring of cloned animals, the experts agreed that it was a difficult and costly issue but as methods were improving constantly, this might change in a few years' time. At present, the only absolutely reliable way to identify cloned animals was to obtain the complete records of the animal from the supplier.

On the issue of animal health and welfare, the experts explained that that cloning could present problems both for the mother and the offspring of all species (deformities of young animals, high mortality, reduction in lifespan), including mammals, fish and birds.

In their closing statements both co-rapporteurs pointed to the lack of complete scientific data and agreed that long-term studies should be conducted in order to better assess the possible effects of consumption of food from cloned animals on human beings over a longer period of time (10-15 years). Ms MOI repeated that no compromises should be made at the expense of animal welfare, which should be a non-negotiable and guiding principle when dealing with this subject.

## *Item 6 on the agenda*

### **Recommendations to the European Commission on the negotiations for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)**

AGRI/8/02699 - 2014/2228(INI)

Co-rapporteurs:

Paolo De Castro (S&D)

James Nicholson (ECR)

PA – PE549.106v01-00

Responsible: INTA – Bernd Lange (S&D) PR – PE549.135v01-00

DT – PE546.593v01-00

- Consideration of draft opinion
- Deadline for tabling amendments: 27 February 2015, 12.00

Mr DE CASTRO (S&D, IT), co-rapporteur on the dossier, presented the draft opinion, emphasising in particular the following aspects:

- the EU's agriculture is a key and sensitive sector in the TTIP negotiations: it has a trade surplus and could benefit from new market opportunities;
- the high quality standards of European products had to be ensured in the agreement;
- sanitary and phytosanitary barriers should be reduced so that the EU could genuinely benefit from market access;
- sensitive products and Geographical Indications should benefit from an appropriate level of protection;
- negotiations should be carried out in a transparent manner.

In the debate, speakers were divided in their views concerning the draft opinion and, more generally, concerning the benefits of the agreement for the EU's agricultural sector. A number of EPP, S&D, ECR and ALDE speakers who took the floor emphasised the need to recognise the interests the EU had in engaging in the TTIP with the US, while they also insisted that EU interests had to be defended and the outcome had to be fair and balanced (Mr DE CASTRO (S&D, IT), Mr NICHOLSON (ECR, UK), Mr DESS (EPP, DE), Mr BUDA (EPP, RO), Ms HERRANZ-GARCIA (EPP, ES), Mr HUITEMA (ALDE, NL)).

Other speakers from the same political groups remained rather cautious and expressed their concerns about the possible negative effects of the agreement on small farms and on the number of large agricultural holdings that could increase as a result of TTIP. They also warned against the risks of an export-oriented agricultural sector (Ms MÜLLER (ALDE, DE), Mr NOICHL (S&D, DE), Mr BOGOVIČ (EPP, SI), Mr ROPÉ (Greens/EFA, LT)).

Green and GUE MEPs in particular were critical of the rapporteur's views and they spoke out against TTIP (Mr BOVÉ (Greens/EFA, FR), Mr HÄUSLING (Greens/EFA, DE), Mr CARTHY (GUE/NGL, IE), Mr FLANAGAN (GUE/NGL, IE), Ms SENRA RODRIGUEZ (GUE/NGL, ES)).

The issue of the harmonisation of EU and US standards was also mentioned by a large number of speakers who were concerned that harmonisation could have a negative impact on the high quality of products produced in the EU (Ms SCOTT CATO (Greens/EFA, UK), Ms MÜLLER, Mr HÄUSLING, Ms NOICHL, Mr TARABELLA (S&D, BE), Mr BOGOVIČ).

Some committee members also talked about the need to grant an appropriate level of protection for sensitive products and also to ensure the protection of Geographical Indications (Mr ANDRIEU (S&D, FR), Mr KUŹMIUK (ECR, PL), Mr CARTHY, Mr DANTIN (EPP, FR), Ms HERRANZ-GARCIA).

The Commission representative (Director John CLARKE) welcomed the draft opinion and said that the Commission was aiming to achieve an ambitious and balanced outcome in the negotiations. He believed that the EU had a lot to gain from TTIP but all areas of concern should be given equal and parallel consideration. He also stressed that none of the elements of TTIP should in any way undermine the EU's quality standards.

He considered that market access barriers present in the meat, dairy, wine, fruit and vegetable, etc. sectors needed to be reduced. With regard to sensitive products, Mr CLARKE agreed with the rapporteur that caution and prudence were very important when dealing with this subject during the negotiations and added that full liberalisation would not be possible in some of these sectors. Concerning Geographical Indications, the Commission representative said that their enforcement and protection was a priority for the Commission.

Finally, Mr CLARKE said that the Commission would follow the call by the rapporteur to engage in the negotiations in a transparent manner.

### *Item 7 on the agenda*

#### **Veterinary medicinal products**

AGRI/8/01653

\*\*\*I 2014/0257(COD) COM(2014)0558 – C8-0164/2014

Rapporteur for the opinion:

Marit Paulsen (ALDE)

Responsible: ENVI – Françoise Grossetete (PPE)

- Presentation by the Commission
- Deadline for tabling amendments: 24 April 2015, 12.00

### *Item 8 on the agenda*

#### **Amendment to Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency**

AGRI/8/01657

\*\*\*I 2014/0256(COD) COM(2014)0557 – C8-0142/2014

Rapporteur for the opinion:

Stanislav Polčák (PPE)

Responsible: ENVI – Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu  
(S&D)

- Presentation by the Commission

The Commission representative presented the background, characteristics and objectives of the proposals. Due to the lack of time the discussion on these two items was postponed to the next meeting.