



**COUNCIL OF
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Conciliation on novel foods failed

In spite of considerable efforts from the Hungarian Presidency the conciliation on novel foods failed after more than three years of negotiations.

The Council has exhausted every possibility trying to reach a balanced solution on novel foods, and in particular on the question of food from cloned animals.

The Council was strongly committed to find a compromise which met consumers' concerns about marketing and information about foods from cloned animals and their offspring. The Council wanted a solution that could be implemented in practice - the Council does not want to mislead consumers by agreeing rules that cannot be enforced. The solution must also comply with the international trade rules that the EU, with the European Parliament's consent, has signed - the Council does not want to provoke a trade conflict.

The discussion failed because of European Parliament's inability to compromise on its request for mandatory labelling for food derived from offspring of cloned animals irrespective of the technical feasibility and the practical implications of such mandatory labelling.

The Council had proposed to the European Parliament the following package of eight measures to meet these consumer, practicability and trade requirements:

- 1) a ban on animal cloning in the EU for food production;
- 2) a ban on food from cloned animals, whatever their origin;
- 3) a ban on any supply of clones in the EU for food production.

These three bans would have been temporary measures, entering into force immediately, and expiring when comprehensive legislation on cloning would have been adopted by the Council and the European Parliament. This would have allowed adjustments of the measures in the light of the experience gained in the meantime.

P R E S S

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In addition, the Council had proposed to the European Parliament:

- 4) a traceability system for semen and embryos from cloned animals;
- 5) a traceability system for the live offspring of cloned animals;
- 6) the introduction, within six months of the entry into force of the new regulation, of labelling requirements for fresh meat of the offspring from cloned cattle;
- 7) these labelling requirements would have been extended to all other foods from the offspring of cloned animals, subject to a Commission report on the feasibility to be tabled within two years, on the basis of which the Commission would have submitted a legislative proposal, if appropriate.
- 8) The Council's offer also included a Commission engagement to publish, by 1 March 2013, a legislative proposal for a comprehensive approach to animal cloning.

As the conciliation on novel foods failed, these measures are now lost. The EU also missed the opportunity to agree on EU rules before the cloning technology further expands.

In the absence of an agreement, the EU stays with the status quo. The current EU legislation provides that food from cloned animals is subject to a pre-market authorisation. The cloning technique is not prohibited at EU level.
