

Beef and veal: marketing of the meat of animals aged twelve months or less

2006/0162(CNS) - 11/06/2007 - Final act

PURPOSE: to increase transparency in the marketing of the meat of animals aged twelve months or less with a view to improving the functioning of the single market and provide better information for consumers.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Regulation (EC) No 700/2007 of 11 June 2007 on the marketing of the meat of bovine animals aged 12 months or less.

CONTENT: the Council adopted by qualified majority (Ireland, Greece, Portugal and UK voted against and Austria abstained), a regulation introducing provisions on traceability and labelling of meat of bovine animals aged 12 months or less all over the food chain. Greece and Portugal made statements.

The systems of production of bovine animals aged 12 months or less and their characteristics at the time of slaughter often differ from one Member State to another. Experience shows that this practice could disturb trade and encourage unfair competition. Consequently, it has a direct effect on the establishment and functioning of the internal market.

To improve the functioning of the internal market, the organization of production and consumer information, This Regulation lays down the conditions for the marketing in the Community of the meat of bovine animals aged 12 months or less, in particular the sales descriptions to be used. It shall apply to the meat of bovine animals aged 12 months or less slaughtered after 1 July 2008, whether produced in the Community or imported from third countries.

According to the Regulation, bovine animals which are slaughtered:

- aged 8 months or less, will be identified by the letter 'V' at the abattoir and their meat will be marked 'veal' or its equivalent in the other Community languages in accordance with the annex, point A of the Regulation;

- aged more than 8 months but not more than 12 months will be identified by the letter 'Z' at the abattoir and their meat will be marked rosé veal (IRL) or beef (UK) or their equivalents in the other Community languages, in accordance with the annex, point B of the Regulation.

In addition to these sales descriptions, the animal's age (8 months or more, or between 8 and 12 months) will be marked on the label to inform consumers.

From now on, operators will record the age of all bovine animals in order to ensure the correct use of the sales designations, but the current registration system for bovine meat could be used for this purpose.

Provisions are also made to ensure that meat imported from third countries satisfy the Regulation's requirements. By 1 July 2008, the Member States should designate the authorities competent to carry out checks relating to the conditions laid down in this Regulation and inform the Commission thereof.

Member States should lay down rules on penalties applicable to infringements of the provisions of this Regulation and ensure that they are implemented. Those penalties should be effective, proportionate and dissuasive.

Meat originating from bovines aged 12 months or more that are slaughtered before 1 July 2008 can continue to be commercialized even if they do not satisfy the requirements of the Regulation.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 29/06/2007. The Regulation applies from 01/07/2008.