Ovine and caprine animals: date of introduction of electronic identification

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The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development adopted the report by Friedrich-Wilhelm **GRAEFE ZU BARINGDORF** (Greens/EFA, DE) amending, under the consultation procedure, the proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 21/2004 as regards the date of introduction of electronic identification for ovine and caprine animals.

The committee introduced the following two amendments to the text:

- the Commission shall submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council by 31 December 2009 on the justification for individual electronic identification systems, and other traceability systems in terms of disease control and on how such systems could be further simplified for farmers and administrative authorities. The report shall be accompanied by appropriate legislative proposals;

- as from 31 December 2009, electronic identification according to the guidelines shall be obligatory for all animals born after that date.

In the explanatory memorandum, the rapporteur states that the Commission report on confirming or delaying the date of entry into force of obligatory electronic identification of ovine and caprine animals is almost 17 months overdue. The Commission has proposed to further delay the application of electronic identification originally foreseen for 1 January 2008. The rapporteur states that report does not deliver sufficient information to judge the situation. It does not sufficiently take into account advantages for animal welfare and tracking of animals. Conventional ear-tags create indescribable sufferings for sheep and goats, especially for young animals and certain breeds with small ears, which is even more deplorable as other devices are at hand and working. The Commission proposes not only to delay the introduction of obligatory identification, it even proposes to delegate the decision to Comitology, thereby excluding the European Parliament on questions as important as the entry into force of certain regulations or parts of is (in this case quite an essential part). **This approach is unacceptable for the Parliament** as there is an urgent need to solve the animal welfare problems quickly.