

Animal feed: placing on the market and use

2008/0050(COD) - 03/03/2008 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to consolidate, revise and modernise Directives on the circulation and labelling of feed materials and compound feed.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

BACKGROUND: marketing conditions for feed plays a crucial role on the competitiveness of the livestock sector. A further important factor in feed is pet food, which is bought regularly by more than 60 million households in the EU. The compound feed industry, including the pet food industry, has an annual turnover of almost EUR 50 billion – not accounting for the feed material business.

Currently, a number of Council Directives and Commission implementing Directives exist that govern the labelling of feed materials and compound feed. The main objective of current legislation is to regulate traceability as well as providing unambiguous information to the consumer. Labelling requirements seek to be as simple and as clear as possible with mandatory requirements being checked against what is necessary to enable the average user to make an informed choice.

CONTENT: the purpose of this proposal is to simplify the current regulatory regime regarding the placing of feed on the market and the use of that feed. In a bid to simplify current provisions all existing legislation in the field of marketing and use of certain feeds is to be replaced by this single Regulation. In summary, the main elements of the Commission's proposal, are as follows:

Introductory provisions:

The main objective of the Regulation is:

- to harmonise conditions for placing and using feed on the market;
- to ensure adequate information is passed on to both users and consumers; and
- to guarantee the effective functioning of the internal market.

Provisions have been put in place to allow for the circulation and use of feed materials and compound feed whilst offering the consumer a high level of safety. At the same time the proposed Regulation seeks to provide for a modern market environment. The proposal covers rules on placing and using feed on the market including labelling, packaging and presentation requirements.

General Requirements:

General safety and marketing requirements have been set out for all feed. Manufacturers and operators will be obliged to follow strict control and feed safety measures. The Commission will be empowered to maintain and update a list of all prohibited feed.

Placing specific types of feed on the market:

Special criteria regarding impure feed material is being proposed. In order to differentiate feed materials from other types of feed the Commission will be empowered to issue guidelines. In addition the term complementary feed and its relation to maximum content of feed additives has been clarified. Concerning

dietetic feed (feed intended for particular nutritional purposes) the Commission proposes to maintain existing provisions in this area albeit that the list of authorisations may be updated in comitology, following consultation from the European Food Safety Authority.

Labelling, presentation and packaging:

The proposal sets out general labelling provisions for all feed materials and compound feed. The Commission has sought to clarify how labelling, along the food chain, should be conducted. In future all claims will have to be scientifically substantiated upon a request from the authorities. The general mandatory labelling requirements will be the same for both feed materials and compound feed. Special labelling requirements are established for contaminated feed.

Community catalogue for feed materials and codes of good labelling practice:

For the sake of market transparency, the Commission is proposing a more complete list of feed materials accompanied with the correct product identification. This list is to be prepared by stakeholders given that feed material specification does not influence feed safety and given that stakeholders are best placed to assess which products need to be prioritised. Within the framework of voluntary labelling industry will be encouraged to develop “good labelling” Community Codes. For its part the Commission will be involved in an advisory capacity and give final approval for the catalogue.

General and final provisions:

The Commission proposes that implementation of the provisions will be done in accordance with the regulatory procedure. The labelling of pre-mixtures (as laid down in Article 16 of Regulation 1831/2003) will be amended in order to remedy certain inconsistencies.