Food safety: electronic identification of bovine animals and beef labelling

2011/0229(COD) - 15/05/2014 - Final act

PURPOSE: to introduce a system of electronic identification of bovine animals on a voluntary basis with a view to enhancing food safety and the protection of animal health in the Union.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) No 653/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 as regards electronic identification of bovine animals and labelling of beef.

CONTENT: the Regulation amends Regulation 1760/2000 as regards electronic identification of bovine animals and deleting the provisions on voluntary beef labelling.

Regulation 1760/2000 establishing a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals and regarding the labelling of beef and beef products provides that each Member State is to establish a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals.

EU rules on the identification and traceability of bovine animals have existed since 1997 but were strengthened in the light of the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) crisis to re-establish consumer confidence in beef and beef products through transparency and full traceability of bovine animals and beef products and also to localise and trace animals for veterinary purposes.

Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 establishes a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals comprising ear tags applied to both ears of each animal, computerised databases, animal passports and individual registers kept at each holding.

This amended Regulation amends the current system as follows:

Electronic identification of bovine animals on a voluntary basis: this amended Regulation leaves open the introduction of EID on a **voluntary basis** in a Member State.

Under the voluntary regime, bovine animals could be identified by two conventional ear tags (current system), or by one conventional visible ear tag and one electronic identifier (i.e. an electronic ear tag or a bolus) conforming to EU-harmonised standards that have been officially approved. However, the amended Regulation also provides the option for Member States to opt for a mandatory regime in their national territory.

As from **18 July 2019**, the Member States shall ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place in order to provide for the identification of animals on the basis of an electronic identifier as an official means of identification in accordance with this Regulation.

Identification of animals from third countries: the Regulation stipulates animals and meat entering the Union from third countries must be subject to identification requirements and traceability ensuring an **identical level of protection**. When live animals are imported into the Union from third countries, they are subject to the same identification requirements as animals born in the Union.

Voluntary labelling: this Regulation **deletes specific rules** on the voluntary labelling system of bovine animals. However, the right of operators to inform consumers through voluntary labelling on the

characteristics of the meat and the right of the consumers to receive verifiable information should not be compromised.

The Regulation stipulates that food information which is **added to labels voluntarily** by operators or organisations marketing beef shall be objective, verifiable by the competent authorities and comprehensible for consumers. That information shall comply with the **horizontal legislation** on labelling and in particular Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Report and legislative developments: no later than 18 July 2019 for the voluntary labelling provisions, and 18 July 2023 for the electronic identification provisions, the Commission shall submit two reports dealing with the implementation and impact of this Regulation and the technical and economic feasibility of introducing mandatory electronic identification throughout the Union.

Those reports shall, if necessary, be accompanied by appropriate legislative proposals.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 17.07.2014.

DELEGATED ACTS: in order to ensure that the necessary rules for the proper functioning of the identification, registration and traceability of bovine animals and of beef are applied, the power to adopt acts in accordance with Article 290 TFEU should be delegated to the Commission. The power to adopt these delegated acts shall be conferred on the Commission for a period of **five years from 17 July 2014**.

The European Parliament or the Council may raise objections to a delegated act within a period of two months from the date of notification (this may be extended by two months.) If the European Parliament or Council express objections, the delegated act will not enter into force.