

Bovine animals: system for the identification and registration

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While approving the Commission's proposal, the rapporteur considered that consumer confidence needed to be restored without imposing any more constraints than absolutely necessary on farmers. He also stressed the need to ensure the system's reliability by extending its application to the whole European Union without, however, increasing the weight of bureaucracy. Commissioner Fischler said that the regulation in question should provide a guarantee of origin for beef and cattle, from the farm to the consumer, in order to win the latter's confidence. This was why a compulsory cattle identification system was needed. In this respect, the Commission could not accept many of the amendments for various reasons: firstly, Mr Fischler considered that the Commission's proposal went far enough; it was also essential to avoid creating a 'grey area' given that extending the definition of keeper to cover trading in animals would mean including telephone transactions in this concept; furthermore, the principle of subsidiarity had to be respected, with which the proposed harmonisation of national technical infrastructures would be incompatible. Finally, the Commission was prepared to accept Article 100a as the legal basis for the regulation in question but Mr Fischler underlined that, in this case, the current debate would amount to a first reading. As a result the Commission would be unable to act with the requisite degree of urgency in this area.