

Animal diseases and public health: scrapie (amend. direct. 91/68/EEC)

1998/0324(COD) - 26/02/2001

The Council, on the basis of a memorandum submitted by the German delegation at the Agriculture Council meeting on 29 January 2001, examined whether the existing monitoring and control measures for scrapie were sufficient, especially with regard to scientific experiments showing that sheep can be infected orally with BSE. The Member States noted the Opinion of the Scientific Steering Committee adopted on 8 and 9 February 2001 on the risk of BSE in small ruminants, taking the view that there was no evidence to confirm "in the field" that BSE was present in small ruminants but stressing the need for improved surveillance of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE) in sheep and the development of a test for differential diagnosis of TSEs. The Presidency noted that the Commission had already excluded some Specified Risk Materials (SRM) from sheep and goats from the human food chain and that it would continue to manage that list of SRM in the light of any new scientific developments. The Member States took note of the ongoing work within the Commission to improve the programme for the surveillance of scrapie, in particular as regards the identification and traceability of sheep and goats and to reinforce the testing programmes for TSE in those animals. The Presidency noted the Commission's intention to speed up the development of a test to make it feasible to distinguish BSE from scrapie. The Presidency noted that, in order to maintain a high level of health protection in the Community, the Member States wished to see the Commission closely following scientific developments with regard to TSE in small ruminants and, if necessary, proposing appropriate measures.