

Products of animal origin intended for human consumption: animal-health rules

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The committee adopted the report by Heinz KINDERMANN (PES, D) broadly approving the proposal, subject to a number of amendments under the consultation procedure. In particular, the committee wanted official controls to be carried out at irregular intervals without prior warning. Furthermore, if the Commission deemed it necessary, it should be able to request detailed reports from the Member States - and third countries - on their inspections, including the nature of the infringements discovered and the steps taken to deal with them. In the interests of transparency and enhancing consumer confidence in food safety procedures, the committee also said that the public should be informed about the persons involved and the nature of any infringements, and that the Commission should publicise any refusal by a Member State to allow Commission officials to carry out inspections on its territory. Another key amendment stipulated that the penalties for infringements of the regulation should be standardised as closely as possible for all the Member States. The Commission should therefore draw up a list of categories of possible infringements and determine in each instance whether these were punishable under criminal or administrative law. With a view to updating the proposal, the committee also introduced a reference to the decision of the December 2000 Agriculture Council to ban cattle aged over 30 months which have not been tested for BSE from entering the food chain. It also wanted to provide for the introduction of adequate traceability procedures. Lastly, it specified that derogations to the regulation may be granted only where the disease situation so permits, with guarantees that they will in no way impair the degree of protection from animal disease.