Public health: monitoring of zoonoses and zoonotic agents (amend. Decision 90/424/EEC, repeal. Directive 92/117/EEC)

2001/0176(COD) - 01/08/2001 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: To set up guidelines monitoring zoonoses and zoonotic agents. CONTENT: The proposed Directive has been set up to monitor all aspects relevant to zoonoses and zoonotic agents. In principle, no zoonoses are excluded from the scope of the Directive, other than transmissible sponigform encephalopathies for which a specific set of rules are already foreseen. The proposed Directive will monitor animal populations and, where necessary, later stages of the food chain. If agreed the Directive would oblige Member States to undertake action in monitoring zoonotic organisms in general. The list of organisms covered is based on the opinion of the Scientific Committee on Veterinary Measures relating Public Health. The collection of data would be based largely on current practices in Member States. There is also a new provision relating to common criteria for data collection. Furthermore, since the collection of human data on the incidence of zoonotic diseases is of paramount importance the proposed Directive recommends closer co-operation between human, veterinary and food safety authorities in Member States. Equally, the Directive proposes to monitor the effects of animal antibiotics on zoonotic organisms and their increasing resistance to antibiotics. A separate Chapter dealing with the monitoring of food-borne outbreaks is proposed. Currently, epidemiological data is collected by a WHO-based europe-wide system. The new measures aims to speed up data collection considered vital for food safety. Food business operators would be obliged to keep the results of testing of zoonoses and to communicate these results to the competent authority upon request. Member States shall prepare a yearly report on trends and sources of zoonoses, which they must transmit to the Commission and the European Food Authority. Lastly, the proposed Directive establishes the framework for designating the Community reference Laboratories and National Reference Laboratories.