

Public health: control of salmonella and food-born zoonotic agents

2001/0177(COD) - 01/08/2001 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: To control salmonella and other food-borne zoonotic agents. **CONTENT:** The proposed Regulation seeks to encompass a fundamental review towards the control of zoonotic diseases. In principle all zoonotic agents would be covered by this Directive. However, the specific control requirements cover certain types of salmonella only. An extension of other pathogens would be possible should epidemiological studies justify such action. Control activities should take place primarily during primary production of animals and where necessary at subsequent stages of the food chain. The proposal creates a framework for a pathogen reduction policy for selected zoonotic agents in selected farming animal populations. Targets would be set for certain salmonella serotype in laying hens, broilers and their breeders and for turkey and pig breeders. Implementing pathogen reduction systems would be done through the establishment of national control programmes. At the same time however, the regulation encourages own-initiative actions by the private sector. Accordingly, Member States should encourage food businesses to establish their own control programmes. The Regulation further suggests that certain control methods should not be used. For example, the use of antibiotics or vaccination in animals may require future scrutiny. Concerning trade in live animals or hatching eggs, a basic element of the proposal is to ensure that the purchaser knows the status of the holding of origin of the animals. In intra-community trade there is a need to use a health certification system. As regards third countries, equivalent measures would be required for importation of relevant live animals and hatching eggs into the Community. Lastly, the proposal establishes the framework for designating the Community reference Laboratories and National Reference Laboratories and to define their respective tasks. It also lays down the quality requirements for laboratories participating in control programmes.