

Prevention, control and eradication of certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE): extension of the period for transitional measures

2003/0046(COD) - 05/03/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to amend Regulation 999/2001/EC and prolong the transitional measures in that regulation by two years. **CONTENT** : Regulation 999/2001/EC establishes rules for the determination of country BSE status. This status in turn determines certain measures concerning the control of BSE and concerning trade and importation of certain live animals and animal products. Prior to the determination of that status, transitional measures are in force. The Regulation specifies that these transitional measures shall be adopted for a maximum period of two years. Commission Regulation 1326/2001/EC laying down transitional measures to permit the changeover to Regulation 999/2001/EC applies from 1 July 2001. Therefore the transitional measures apply until 30 June 2003. The assessment of dossiers of Member States and third countries started at the end of 2001. It soon became evident that some modifications to the categorisation criteria were necessary to achieve an appropriate categorisation, reflecting the BSE risk. The criteria had been taken over from the International Animal Health Code of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). The Community made a proposal amending the categorisation criteria to the OIE. However, the current criteria remain unchanged. It also appears that the OIE will not come forward with a proposed list of BSE free countries in the near future. Also, the scientific risk assessments of all countries have not been fully concluded. It is therefore proposed to prolong the transitional measures with two years, until 1 July 2005. The prolongation will maintain the present level of public health protection as the transitional measures on specified risk material (SRM) and slaughter methods will be maintained within the EU and in respect of third countries. In the absence of prolongation of these transitional measures the above risk management measures cannot be maintained. The two-year extension of time is designed for the Commission to continue its attempts to reach an agreement at international level (OIE) on the determination of BSE status of countries on the basis of risk. The Commission would at the same time conclude the scientific risk assessments.