Animal feed: hygiene requirements and traceability of feed

2003/0071(COD) - 14/04/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to lay down general rules on feed hygiene and the conditions and arrangements ensuring full traceability of feed. CONTENT : this proposal concerns a new Regulation on hygiene requirements for animal feed. Directive 95/69/EC ensures that certain establishments and intermediaries that manufacture and circulate certain additives, premixtures and products covered by Directive 82/471/EEC are approved by the competent authorities verifying compliance with technical specifications. Therefore, rules already exist for aspects of animal feed, such as feed additives, controls and labelling. However, rules on the production, transport, storage and handling of feed as proposed today were missing. Feed businesses operating in the feed chain and carrying out activities other than those described in Directive 95/69/EC are exempt from the registration or approval requirement. Following the BSE crisis, the two serious occurrences of serious dioxin contamination and other concerns such as the contamination of feed materials and feedingstuffs with nitrofen or hormones, this draft regulation proposes: - to ensure the safety of all kinds of feed; - to ensure that all feed businesses operate in accordance with harmonised hygiene requirements; - to improve traceability. Also of particular importance is the obligation for feed operators to provide financial guarantees to cover the costs if something is wrong with their feed. The following main elements are included in the proposed Regulation: - It applies to the production of feed at all stages, including the primary (on farm) production of feed. It will therefore provide improved traceability throughout the food chain. This last point is of particular importance to enable the swift and accurate identification of feed (and food derived from feed), should a problem be detected. This is essential for the effective protection of public health. - It repeats the requirement that only safe feed be placed on the market by businesses. This obligation on business is already enshrined in the EU Food Law Regulation for the food producing industry. Under current hygiene legislation, the primary responsibility for ensuring compliance with food law, and in particular the safety of food, rests with the food business. This proposal will extend the principle to the entire feed chain. Operators must respect hygiene requirements defined in the Regulation. For example, measures to control the contamination arising from air, soil, and water or plant protection products. Staff must demonstrate adequate training. - Feed business operators other than at the level of primary production must implement the HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) system to identify where control is critical to ensure feed safety. This is a self-checking system by industry where each establishment will have to design a specific monitoring programme in which all potential hazards must be identified. Proper control procedures for each feed business must be set up individually and documents and records of whatever checks are carried out have to be kept. - The proposal introduces the compulsory registration of all feed businesses by the competent authority. The current obligation toapprove after an on-the-spot check by the competent authorities certain types of feed producers who deal with particular substances such as antimicrobial substances will be maintained. - The development of guides of good practices for the production of feed is foreseen under the proposed Regulation. This will particularly affect the primary production on farm level. Hazards in feed may originate at farm level. This Regulation will provide Community legislation with an instrument that covers the entire feed chain and the food chain from farm to table. Codes of good practice will control possible hazards. Some countries or sectors do have such codes of good practice already. - Feed operators will be obliged to ensure a financial guarantee, such as insurance, to cover the cost of risks related to their businesses. This includes the costs arising from withdrawing products from the market, and the treatment or destruction of feed or affected food. - Provisions are made for equivalent standards for imported feed into the EU, particularly the requirement that feed only originates in establishments from which imports of feed are permitted. The following are excluded from the Regulation: - the private production of feed and the feeding of animals for home consumption; - the feeding of non-food-producing animals; - the retailing of pet food; - trade between farmers of small quantities of feed at local level. Member States will be allowed to establish, at national level, rules governing this exclusion.