

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

2001/0177(COD) - 17/04/2002

The committee adopted the report by Marit Paulsen (ELDR, S) amending the proposal under the codecision procedure (1st reading) with a view to broadening its scope. The committee criticised the Commission's intention, in practice, to set up control programmes only for poultry and eggs even though salmonella is common in other food-producing animals. Amendments were therefore adopted extending the measures to include slaughter pigs, sheep calves and other cattle. MEPs also sought to ensure that the directive included the monitoring of plant products, arguing that the number of zoonoses spread through such products was increasing. A further amendment stipulated that a Member State which had not had its national control programme approved within 12 months of the Community targets being set should be prohibited from selling certain products on the internal market. The amendment aimed to ensure that negligent producers did not enjoy a financial advantage over those who complied with the rules. The committee also pointed out that the regulation would impose a substantial burden on small businesses and that the Member States should therefore take account of this fact when drawing up their national control programmes in order to achieve an appropriate distribution of costs. The committee also restructured the proposal slightly so as to include parts of the annex in the substantive part of the text. It felt that the criteria for laying down the list of zoonoses and stages in the food chain and the details of the Community targets to be achieved should be incorporated into Article 4 (Community targets for the reduction of prevalences of zoonoses and zoonotic agents) on the grounds that these were of fundamental importance and should not just be listed in the Annex. Lastly, the committee wanted one of the recitals to state that the use of antibiotics for preventive purposes or to promote growth should be prohibited.