

Protection of human health: hygiene of foodstuffs

2000/0178(COD) - 15/05/2002 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament in its first reading, adopted a resolution drafted by Horst SCHNELLHARDT (EPP-ED, Germany) on food hygiene. (Please refer to the document dated 17/04/02.) Parliament emphasised that the HACCP is an instrument to help food business operators attain a higher standard of food safety. HACCP should not be regarded as a method of self-regulation and does not replace official controls. Since application of the full HACCP system in the primary sector is currently not yet feasible from a practical point of view, the further introduction of appropriate practices must be encouraged. Successful implementation of the HACCP system will require the full cooperation and commitment of the business's employees, who must undergo training. Parliament feels that food operators should bear responsibility for the food produced. A series of amendments were adopted to reflect this. Where appropriate, data on products with a specific shelf life must be kept for six months following expiry of the shelf life. A time limit of five years is prescribed for keeping data on products which do not have a shelf life. Parliament stated that exceptions should be made for local specialities. The regulation should not apply to the primary production of food for domestic use nor to the direct supply of small quantities of primary products such as honey, wild game, fish, and homegrown fruit to the final consumer or to the local retail trade.