

Prevention, control and eradication of certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs)

2004/0270B(COD) - 25/04/2006

The committee adopted the report by Dagmar ROTH-BEHRENDT (PES, DE) broadly approving the proposed regulation subject to a number of amendments under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure:

- it should be stipulated that "the feeding to ruminants of protein derived from animals is prohibited", given that adult ruminants are herbivores and should not be fed at all with animal proteins, in forms not constituting part of the natural diet;
- however, a legal base should be introduced for defining tolerance levels for adventitious cross-contamination of feedingstuffs with "insignificant amounts" of animal proteins;
- the use of mechanically separated meat (MSM) for human consumption should be reviewed. Member States should report to the Commission by July 2009 on the use and production methods of MSM in their country. The Commission should thereafter submit a paper to Parliament and Council on "the future necessity and use of MSM in the European Union, including the information policy towards consumers";
- the reduction of BSE risk categories (from five to three) as adopted by the General Assembly of the OIE in May 2005 should be accompanied by comprehensive active and passive surveillance measures;
- breeding programmes for resistance to TSE should be introduced on a voluntary basis, rather than being compulsory, and the scientific results and overall consequences of such programmes should be evaluated regularly;
- the list of "specified risk material" (SRM) laid down in Annex V of the regulation should include "at least the brain, spinal cord, eyes and tonsils of bovine animals aged over 12 months";
- to avoid the slaughter of entire "cohorts", a provision should be introduced to allow the use of "cohort animals" until the end of their productive life, subject to strict control conditions. MEPs argued that there is no scientific proof that BSE is transmitted through milk or by cows to their calves;
- Parliament and the Council should have the right to object to decisions adopted by the relevant Standing Committee involving amendments to the extensive and detailed annexes to the regulation. Any decision adopted under the committee procedure should be revoked if Parliament or Council raises objections to it within a period of six months.