

# Beef and veal: marketing of the meat of animals aged twelve months or less

2006/0162(CNS) - 08/09/2006 - Legislative proposal

**PURPOSE** : to increase transparency in the marketing of the meat of animals aged twelve months or less with a view to improving the functioning of the single market and provide better information for consumers.

**PROPOSED ACT** : Council Regulation.

**CONTENT** : the systems of production of bovine animals aged twelve months or less and their characteristics at the time of slaughter often differ from one Member State to another. Essentially, there are two major types of production system. In the first, the animals are fed mainly on milk and milk products and are slaughtered before the age of eight months, generally at around six or seven months. In the second, the animals are fed almost exclusively on cereals supplemented with fodder, and are slaughtered at an age of ten months and above.

The first type of production system exists in almost all the Member States, but has developed in five of them in particular (France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany). The second is known and has developed in only a small number of Member States, mainly the Netherlands, Denmark and Spain. Meat produced under these two systems may be marketed under various names, but generally it is marketed under one single sales description, at least on the main consumer markets in the Community. Consequently, it has a direct effect on the establishment and functioning of the single market. This practice could also cause confusion for consumers and is likely to mislead them.

In order to improve the functioning of the single market, the marketing of the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less should be organised in such a way as to make it as transparent as possible. This will also enable such production to be better organised.

The Commission, therefore, proposes the establishment of sales descriptions to be used in each Member State for the marketing of the meat of animals in each of the two sub-categories of animal defined, coupled with a requirement to indicate the age of the animals on slaughter.

Traders wishing to supplement the sales descriptions provided for in this Regulation by other voluntary information should be able to do.

In certain cases, the meat of bovine animals aged twelve months or less enjoys protection under Council Regulation 510/2006/EC on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs. It is marketed under the protected indication or designation and, as a result, can be clearly identified by traders and consumers. Also, it is usually marketed at a local level. Accordingly, the provisions of this Regulation must not affect the designations protected under Regulation 510/2006/EC.

The Member States should designate the authorities competent to carry out checks relating to the conditions laid down in this Regulation and provision should be made for the Commission to ensure, where necessary by means of on-the-spot checks, that those conditions are met. Lastly, for the sake of consistency and in order to avoid any distortion of competition, meat imported from third countries should also be subject to the provisions of this Regulation.

