Basic information

2011/0229(COD) COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Regulation	Procedure completed
Food safety: electronic identification of bovine animals and beef labelling Amending Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 1999/0204(COD) **Subject** 3.10.03 Marketing and trade of agricultural products and livestock 3.10.04 Livestock farming 3.10.05.01 Meat 3.10.08 Animal health requirements, veterinary legislation and pharmacy 4.60.04.04 Food safety	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	AUCONIE Sophie (PPE)	28/09/2011
	Shadow rapporteur ROTH-BEHRENDT Dagmar (S&D) PAKARINEN Riikka (ALDE) STAES Bart (Verts/ALE) NICHOLSON James (ECR) LIOTARD Kartika Tamara (GUE/NGL)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	NICHOLSON James (ECR)	23/11/2011

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	3180	2012-06-26
Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	3310	2014-05-06

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Health and Food Safety	BORG Tonio

European Economic and Social Committee
European Committee of the Regions

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
30/08/2011	Initial legislative proposal published	COM(2011)0525	Summary
15/09/2011	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
04/04/2012	Legislative proposal published	COM(2012)0162	Summary
30/05/2012	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
13/06/2012	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A7-0199/2012	Summary
26/06/2012	Debate in Council		Summary
10/09/2012	Debate in Parliament		
11/09/2012	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T7-0312/2012	Summary
11/09/2012	Results of vote in Parliament		
02/04/2014	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T7-0262/2014	Summary
02/04/2014	Results of vote in Parliament		
06/05/2014	Act adopted by Council after Parliament's 1st reading		
15/05/2014	Final act signed		
15/05/2014	End of procedure in Parliament		
27/06/2014	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2011/0229(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
Amendments and repeals	Amending Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 1999/0204(COD)
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 168-p4 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 043-p2
Mandatory consultation of other institutions	European Economic and Social Committee European Committee of the Regions
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/7/06728

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE478.718	11/01/2012	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE480.879	17/02/2012	
Committee opinion	AGRI	PE483.716	14/05/2012	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A7-0199/2012	13/06/2012	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading /single reading		T7-0312/2012	11/09/2012	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T7-0262/2014	02/04/2014	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Draft final act	00026/2014/LEX	15/05/2014	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Initial legislative proposal	COM(2011)0525	30/08/2011	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2011)1008	30/08/2011	
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2011)1009	30/08/2011	
Legislative proposal	COM(2012)0162	04/04/2012	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2014)471	09/07/2014	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	IT_SENATE	COM(2011)0525	24/02/2012	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES1311/2012	23/05/2012	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
National parliaments	IPEX	
European Commission	EUR-Lex	
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act	
Regulation 2014/0653 OJ L 189 27.06.2014, p. 0033	Summary

Food safety: electronic identification of bovine animals and beef labelling

2011/0229(COD) - 02/04/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 386 votes to 228, with 17 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the amended proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the amended proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 as regards electronic identification of bovine animals and deleting the provisions on voluntary beef labelling.

The matter had been referred back to the committee responsible for re-examination at the 11 September 2012 session.

Parliament adopted its position at first reading according to the ordinary legislative procedure. The amendments adopted in plenary are the result of an agreement negotiated between the European Parliament and the Council. They amend the proposal as follows:

Obligation to identify animals: according to the amended text, all animals

on a holding shall be identified by at least two means of identification listed in Annex I and approved by the competent authority, i.e. **(i) an electronic ear tag; (ii) ruminal bolus; (iii) an injectable transponder**. At least one of the means of identification shall be visible and bear a visible identification code.

This does not apply to animals that were born before 1 January 1998 and that are not intended for intra-Union trade. Those animals shall be identified by at least one means of identification.

- In order to **ensure the adaptation to technical progress**, the Commission should be empowered to adopt delegated acts concerning the addition of means of identification to the list set out in Annex -I, whilst ensuring their interoperability.
- **By derogation**, in the event that the characters forming the animal's identification code do not permit the application of an electronic identifier with the same unique identification code, the Member State concerned may allow that, under the supervision of its competent authority, the second means of identification may bear a different code so long as full traceability is ensured and the animal is not intended for intra-Union trade.
- **To ensure adequate traceability**, the Commission shall adopt delegated acts concerning the requirements for the means of identification and the transitional measures required for the introduction of a particular means of identification.
- **On the basis of the relevant ISO standards** or other international technical standards adopted by recognized international standard-setting organizations, the Commission shall lay down, by means of implementing acts, the necessary rules concerning: (i) the format and design of the means of identification; (ii) technical procedures for the electronic identification of bovine animals; and (iii) the configuration of the identification code.

Within five years of the entry into force of the amending Regulation, Member States should ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place in order to provide for the identification of animals on the basis of an electronic identifier as an **official means of identification** in accordance with this Regulation

Time period for the application of the means of identification: the means of identification shall be applied to the animal before the expiry of a maximum period, to be determined by the Member State in which the animal was born. The maximum period shall be calculated from the date of birth of the animal and shall not exceed 20 days. By way of derogation, for reasons related to the physiological development of the animals, that period may, for the second means of identification, be extended **up to 60 days** following the birth of the animal.

Identification of animals from third countries: animals and meat entering the Union from third countries must be subject to identification requirements and traceability ensuring an **identical level of protection**. When live animals are imported into the Union from third countries, they are subject to the **same identification requirements** as animals born in the Union.

Removal, modification or replacement of means of identification: no means of identification may be removed, modified or replaced without the permission of the competent authority. Such permission may only be granted where the removal, modification or replacement **do not compromise the traceability of the animal** and where its individual identification, including the holding on which it was born, is possible.

Any replacement of an identification code shall be recorded in the computerised database, together with the unique identification code of the original means of identification of the animal.

Passports: passports should be issued only for animals intended for intra-Union trade. However, this Regulation should not preclude national provisions concerning the issuing of passports for animals not intended for intra-Union trade.

Voluntary labelling: the amended text stipulates that food information which is **added to labels voluntarily** by operators or organisations marketing beef shall be objective, verifiable by the competent authorities and comprehensible for consumers. That information shall **comply with the horizontal legislation** on labelling and in particular Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Where operators or organisations marketing beef do not respect these obligations, the competent authority shall apply appropriate penalties. Any penalties imposed by the Member State on a keeper, operator or organisation marketing beef shall be **effective, dissuasive and proportionate.**

Follow-up: the implementation of the regulation will have to be monitored. Therefore, **five years** following its entry into force, in the case of the provisions on the optional labelling of beef, and **nine years** in the case of the provisions regarding electronic identification, the Commission should present two reports to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the regulation and the technical and economic feasibility of introducing mandatory electronic identification throughout the Union. Those reports shall, if necessary, be accompanied by appropriate legislative proposals.

Food safety: electronic identification of bovine animals and beef labelling

2011/0229(COD) - 15/05/2014 - Final act

PURPOSE: to introduce a system of electronic identification of bovine animals on a voluntary basis with a view to enhancing food safety and the protection of animal health in the Union.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) No 653/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 as regards electronic identification of bovine animals and labelling of beef.

CONTENT: the Regulation amends Regulation 1760/2000 as regards electronic identification of bovine animals and deleting the provisions on voluntary beef labelling.

Regulation 1760/2000 establishing a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals and regarding the labelling of beef and beef products provides that each Member State is to establish a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals.

EU rules on the identification and traceability of bovine animals have existed since 1997 but were strengthened in the light of the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) crisis to re-establish consumer confidence in beef and beef products through transparency and full traceability of bovine animals and beef products and also to localise and trace animals for veterinary purposes.

Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 establishes a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals comprising ear tags applied to both ears of each animal, computerised databases, animal passports and individual registers kept at each holding.

This amended Regulation amends the current system as follows:

Electronic identification of bovine animals on a voluntary basis: this amended Regulation leaves open the introduction of EID on a **voluntary basis** in a Member State.

Under the voluntary regime, bovine animals could be identified by two conventional ear tags (current system), or by one conventional visible ear tag and one electronic identifier (i.e. an electronic ear tag or a bolus) conforming to EU-harmonised standards that have been officially approved. However, the amended Regulation also provides the option for Member States to opt for a mandatory regime in their national territory.

As from **18 July 2019**, the Member States shall ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place in order to provide for the identification of animals on the basis of an electronic identifier as an official means of identification in accordance with this Regulation.

Identification of animals from third countries: the Regulation stipulates animals and meat entering the Union from third countries must be subject to identification requirements and traceability ensuring an **identical level of protection**. When live animals are imported into the Union from third countries, they are subject to the same identification requirements as animals born in the Union.

Voluntary labelling: this Regulation **deletes specific rules** on the voluntary labelling system of bovine animals. However, the right of operators to inform consumers through voluntary labelling on the characteristics of the meat and the right of the consumers to receive verifiable information should not be compromised.

The Regulation stipulates that food information which is **added to labels voluntarily** by operators or organisations marketing beef shall be objective, verifiable by the competent authorities and comprehensible for consumers. That information shall comply with the **horizontal legislation** on labelling and in particular Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Report and legislative developments: no later than 18 July 2019 for the voluntary labelling provisions, and 18 July 2023 for the electronic identification provisions, the Commission shall submit two reports dealing with the implementation and impact of this Regulation and the technical and economic feasibility of introducing mandatory electronic identification throughout the Union.

Those reports shall, if necessary, be accompanied by appropriate legislative proposals.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 17.07.2014.

DELEGATED ACTS: in order to ensure that the necessary rules for the proper functioning of the identification, registration and traceability of bovine animals and of beef are applied, the power to adopt acts in accordance with Article 290 TFEU should be delegated to the Commission. The power to adopt these delegated acts shall be conferred on the Commission for a period of **five years from 17 July 2014**.

The European Parliament or the Council may raise objections to a delegated act within a period of two months from the date of notification (this may be extended by two months.) If the European Parliament or Council express objections, the delegated act will not enter into force.

Food safety: electronic identification of bovine animals and beef labelling

2011/0229(COD) - 04/04/2012

This amended proposal replaces the proposal adopted by the Commission on 30 August 2011 on amending Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 as regards electronic identification of bovine animals and deleting the provisions on voluntary beef labelling (please see the summary of the same date).

The **only changes introduced in this new proposal** concern the provisions of Article 22 aimed at ensuring uniform conditions for the imposition of sanctions in case of non-compliance with the relevant rules on identification of animals and labelling of beef and beef products.

The proposal follows from the need to align Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which introduced the adoption of delegated acts (Article 290 of the Treaty) and implementing acts (Article 291 of the Treaty.)

In concrete terms, the proposal provides as follows;

- the power to adopt acts in accordance with Article 290 of the Treaty is **delegated** to the Commission in respect of the administrative sanctions to be applied by the Member States in cases of irregularities non-compliance with Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000;
- **implementing powers** should be conferred on the Commission in order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of this Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000, corrective actions to be taken by Member States to ensure proper compliance with Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000, in cases where on–the-spot checks so justify.

Food safety: electronic identification of bovine animals and beef labelling

2011/0229(COD) - 04/04/2012

This amended proposal replaces the proposal adopted by the Commission on 30 August 2011 on amending Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 as regards electronic identification of bovine animals and deleting the provisions on voluntary beef labelling (please see the summary of the same date).

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Food safety: electronic identification of bovine animals and beef labelling

2011/0229(COD) - 04/04/2012 - Legislative proposal

This amended proposal replaces the proposal adopted by the Commission on 30 August 2011 on amending Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 as regards electronic identification of bovine animals and deleting the provisions on voluntary beef labelling (please see the summary of the same date).

The **only changes introduced in this new proposal** concern the provisions of Article 22 aimed at ensuring uniform conditions for the imposition of sanctions in case of non-compliance with the relevant rules on identification of animals and labelling of beef and beef products.

The proposal follows from the need to align Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which introduced the adoption of delegated acts (Article 290 of the Treaty) and implementing acts (Article 291 of the Treaty.)

In concrete terms, the proposal provides as follows;

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- **implementing powers** should be conferred on the Commission in order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of this Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000, corrective actions to be taken by Member States to ensure proper compliance with Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000, in cases where on-the-spot checks so justify.

Food safety: electronic identification of bovine animals and beef labelling

2011/0229(COD) - 13/06/2012 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the report by Sophie AUCONIE (EPP, FR) on the amended proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 as regards electronic identification of bovine animals and deleting the provisions on voluntary beef labelling.

The committee recommends that the European Parliament's position in first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the Commission proposal as follows:

Traceability: the report stresses that tracing of beef to source via identification and registration is a **prerequisite for origin labelling** throughout the food chain. Those measures ensure consumer protection and public health and promote consumer confidence. Animals and meat entering the Union from third countries should be subject to the same identification and traceability requirements that apply to animals born in the Union.

Obligations on the identification of animals: the Commission shall ensure that identifiers used in the Union are interoperable and consistent with ISO standards. The proposal states that the means of identification shall be allocated to the holding, distributed and applied to the animals in a manner determined by the competent authority. Members state that this shall not apply to animals born before 1 January 1998 and not intended for intra-Union trade.

All means of identification applied to one animal shall bear the same unique identification code, which makes it possible to identify the animal individually together with the holding on which it was born. **By way of derogation**, in cases where it is not possible for the two individual means of identification to bear the same unique identification code, the competent authority may, under its supervision, **allow for the second means of identification to bear a different code** provided that full traceability is ensured and the individual identification of the animal, including the holding on which it was born, is possible.

The Commission shall supply other Member States, in a language, which is readily understandable by those Member States, with a **summary of the national rules governing the movement of animals** to Member States that have opted for compulsory EID and shall make them publicly available.

Time period for the application of the means of identification: the means of identification shall be applied within a maximum period from the birth of the animal to be determined by the Member State in which the animal was born. Members consider that that period shall not be longer than 60 days for the second means of identification, **for reasons related to the physiological development of the animals.**

Moreover, no animal may leave the holding where it was born before the two means of identification have been applied except in case of force majeure.

By way of derogation, for reasons related to the physiological development of the animals, the time period for identification of animals from third countries may be extended by up to 60 days for the second means of identification.

Removal or replacement of means of identification: Members add that no means of identification shall be **modified**, removed or replaced without the permission and without the control of the competent authority, and any modification must take place with the latter's permission.

Report on all movements, births and deaths of animals: farmers must enter up-to-date information directly into the computerised database within **seventy-two hours** of the occurrence of the event (the Commission proposal had specified 24 hours).

Training: the report requires any person responsible for the identification and registration of animals receive instructions and guidance on the relevant provisions of the Regulation, which shall be supplied, **at no cost to the recipient**, every time a change is made to the relevant provisions and as often as necessary. Member States shall share best practices in order to ensure good quality of training and information sharing across the Union.

Cloned animals: noting that there is no specific legislation on cloning, but that opinion polls show that this issue is of great interest for the European public. Members feel it is appropriate to ensure that beef derived from cloned animals or their descendants is **labelled as such** within 6 months of entry into force of the Regulation.

Voluntary labelling: the report stresses that even if it would be preferable to delete the 'system' of voluntary labelling (including specifications, sanctions, etc.), voluntary labelling still remains. There is a need for general rules to be drawn up to cover this and protect consumers (requiring objective information which can be checked by the relevant authorities and understood by consumers). These general rules will complete the horizontal legislation on labelling.

Delegated acts: the power to adopt delegated acts will be conferred on the Commission for a period of five years from the date of entry into force of the Regulation.

Report and legislative developments: no later than 5 years after the entry into force of the Regulation, the Commission shall a report dealing both with implementation of the Regulation and the technical and economic feasibility of introducing mandatory electronic identification everywhere in the Union. If this report concludes that electronic identification should become mandatory, it shall be accompanied by an appropriate legislative proposal.

Food safety: electronic identification of bovine animals and beef labelling

2011/0229(COD) - 26/06/2012

The Presidency presented a **report highlighting the progress** achieved during the first half of 2012 on two proposals:

- **this one amending regulation 1760/2000** as regards electronic identification of bovine animals and deleting the provisions on voluntary beef labelling;
- and the other proposal amending directive 64/432/EEC as regards computer databases which are part of the surveillance networks in the Member States.

The amendment to the regulation has two main objectives:

to introduce electronic identification (EID) as an official means of identification of bovine animals throughout the EU on a voluntary basis for the keepers;

to repeal the specific administrative procedures required for indication of voluntary information on the labels of beef and beef products.

The main elements of the discussion are as follows:

(1) Electronic identification : the Commission's proposal would introduce the option for keepers to use electronic identification as an official means of identification of bovine animals with immediate effect throughout the EU. Thus, it would allow keepers to identify their bovine animals with an electronic means of identification accompanying a conventional ear tag, or to keep the two conventional ear tags as currently required. As an additional step, each Member State could also decide to make electronic identification mandatory on its territory.

Some delegations expressed concerns about the fact that a keeper's choice for the EID option would entail mandatory recognition of EID as an official means of identification. While some delegations would prefer to introduce the new possibility as soon as possible, other delegations requested a transitional period and some would prefer not to change the current requirements at all. On the basis of discussions at the Working Party of Chief Veterinary Officers on 4 May 2012, the Presidency concluded that a **transitional period of seven years for introducing electronic identification as an official means of identification** would meet the approval of the majority of delegations.

(2) Means of identification : the Commission's proposal would confer to the Commission delegated and implementing powers to adopt all requirements for the means of identification.

Following the request made at the Working Party to more explicitly define the content and scope of this delegation of power, the Presidency presented a partial rewording of Article 4, providing i.a. for an exhaustive list of possible means of identification in an Annex.

(3) Derogations from the unique identification code : the Commission's proposal would require that all bovine animals bear in both official means of identification the same unique identification code, without exception. However, current technical conditions related to electronic identifiers make it difficult or impossible to follow this rule in a limited number of very specific situations.

The Presidency therefore introduced in the compromise text **two derogations** which cover these rare cases and are subject to strict conditions.

(4) Voluntary beef labelling : the Commission proposes to repeal the voluntary labelling system, which has to be applied for the indication of any additional information to that which is compulsory according to Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000. While the majority of delegations is in favour of repealing the system as proposed by the Commission, some delegations would prefer to keep it in place.

(5) Definitions : the Commission proposes to leave certain definitions of beef products for secondary legislation (as is the case today) and confer the power to the Commission to establish such definitions in the form of delegated acts. However, the Working Party preferred to reserve the power to establish definitions to the European Parliament and Council as co-legislators.

(6) Conferral of powers to the Commission : for reasons of clarity and consistency, the Working Party agreed to re-structure these provisions, putting them in each case directly into the relevant Article. The Working Party also agreed to define the objectives of the delegation of power more explicitly, in conformity with Article 290 TFEU. Furthermore, some powers were considered to be obsolete.

Sanctions : according to the Commission's amended proposal, the Commission should be empowered to adopt delegated acts to lay down administrative sanctions. This approach was not supported by the Working Party. Given the fact that the existing secondary legislation already contains a very broad set of provisions on sanctions, the Presidency compromise consolidates these provisions in the basic act. To meet the Commission representatives' concern about sufficient flexibility regarding these provisions, the Presidency suggested to give the Commission **implementing powers** to ensure uniform conditions of their application, where needed.

Food safety: electronic identification of bovine animals and beef labelling

2011/0229(COD) - 11/09/2012 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 346 votes to 312, with 13 abstentions, **amendments** on the amended proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the amended proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 as regards electronic identification of bovine animals and deleting the provisions on voluntary beef labelling.

The matter was referred back to the committee responsible for reexamination and the vote was postponed until a subsequent plenary session.

The main amendments adopted by Parliament are as follows:

Traceability: Parliament stresses that the traceability of beef to its source via identification and registration is a prerequisite for origin labelling throughout the food chain. Those measures ensure consumer protection and public health and promote consumer confidence.

Obligations on the identification of animals: the Commission shall ensure that identifiers used in the Union are interoperable and consistent with **ISO standards**.

The proposal states that the means of identification shall be allocated to the holding, distributed and applied to the animals in a manner determined by the competent authority. Members state that this shall not apply to animals born before 1 January 1998 and not intended for intra-Union trade.

All means of identification applied to one animal shall bear the same unique identification code, which makes it possible to identify the animal individually together with the holding on which it was born. **By way of derogation**, in cases where it is not possible for the two individual means of identification to bear the same unique identification code, **the competent authority may, under its supervision, allow for the second means of identification to bear a different code provided that full traceability is ensured** and the individual identification of the animal, including the holding on which it was born, is possible.

The Commission shall supply other Member States, in a language, which is readily understandable by those Member States, with **a summary of the national rules governing the movement of animals** to Member States that have opted for compulsory EID and shall make them publicly available.

Time period for the application of the means of identification: the means of identification shall be applied within a maximum period from the birth of the animal to be determined by the Member State in which the animal was born. Members consider that that period shall not be longer than 60 days for the second means of identification, for reasons related to the physiological development of the animals.

Moreover, no animal may leave the holding where it was born before the two means of identification have been applied except in case of *force majeure*.

By way of derogation, for reasons related to the physiological development of the animals, **the time period for identification of animals from third countries may be extended by up to 60 days for the second means of identification**.

Removal or replacement of means of identification: Parliament adds that no means of identification shall be **modified** without the permission and without the control of the competent authority, and any modification must take place with the latter's permission.

Report on all movements, births and deaths of animals: farmers must enter up-to-date information directly into the computerised database within **72 hours** of the occurrence of the event (the Commission proposal had specified 24 hours).

Training: an amendment requires that information addressed to any person responsible for the identification and registration of animals shall be supplied, **at no cost to the recipient**, every time a change is made to the relevant provisions and as often as necessary. Member States shall **share best practices** in order to ensure good quality of training and information sharing across the Union.

Cloned animals: Members want to ensure that beef derived from cloned animals or their **descendants is labelled as such** within 6 months of entry into force of the Regulation.

Voluntary labelling: Parliament suggests that **starting from 1 January 2014,** the heading of section II of title II shall be replaced by the words 'Voluntary labelling', Articles 16, 17 and 18 are deleted, and that a new Article 15a shall be inserted into section II of title II. This would lay down **general rules** to cover this and protect consumers (labels with objective information which can be checked by the relevant authorities and understood by consumers). The competent authority shall verify the truthfulness of the voluntary information. In the event of a failure on the part of operators or organisations marketing beef to comply with these obligations, sanctions will be applied.

Delegated acts: the power to adopt delegated acts will be conferred on the Commission for a period of five years from the date of entry into force of the Regulation.

Report and legislative developments: no later than 5 years after the entry into force of the Regulation, the Commission shall a report dealing both with implementation of the Regulation and the technical and economic feasibility of introducing mandatory electronic identification everywhere in the Union. If this report concludes that electronic identification should become mandatory, it shall be accompanied by an appropriate legislative proposal.

Food safety: electronic identification of bovine animals and beef labelling

2011/0229(COD) - 30/08/2011 - Initial legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to introduce a system of electronic identification of bovine animals on a voluntary basis with a view to enhancing food safety and the protection of animal health in the Union.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

BACKGROUND: rules on the identification and traceability of bovine animals were already introduced in 1997 were strengthened following the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) epidemic. Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 which establishes a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals and labelling of beef and beef products includes the elements "double ear tag", "holding register", "cattle passport" and "computerised database".

The Commission's Communication concerning an "Action Programme for Reducing Administrative Burdens in the EU" described the identification and registration of bovine animals and the voluntary labelling of beef and beef products as information obligations with special importance in terms of the burdens they impose on businesses. The Action Plan of the new EU Animal Health Strategy foresees the simplification of information obligations (e.g. holding registers, passports) by the Commission in the course of introduction of bovine electronic identification (EID). The use of electronic identifiers could help to reduce the administrative burden and paper-work.

Electronic identification (EID) based on radio frequency identification (RFID) has considerably developed during the last 10 years and provides for a faster and more accurate reading of individual animal codes directly into data processing systems (better and faster traceability of infected animals and /or infected food). The existing legislation on bovine identification does not reflect these latest technological developments.

The current legal framework does not prohibit Member States from using electronic identifiers on a voluntary basis, but this must be done in addition to the official conventional visible ear tags. As no harmonised technical EU standards have been established, different types of electronic identifiers and readers with different RFID frequencies could be used in different places.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: the impact assessment concluded that introducing bovine EID on a voluntary basis as a tool for official identification would allow actors to have time to familiarise themselves with the EID system and to identify the added value it would bring in particular circumstances. This option is preferable as it leaves open to EU Member States and all the private actors involved to organise themselves.

LEGAL BASIS: Articles 43(2) and 168(4)(b) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

CONTENT: based on the results of consultations with interested parties, the Commission is proposing the revision of Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 with a view to introducing new provisions regarding the identification of bovine animals and the voluntary labelling of bovine meat.

The general objectives of the proposal are as follows:

- to promote the competitiveness of the sector;
- to reduce administrative burdens and simplify the procedures regarding cattle passports and holding registers;
- to contribute to the improvement of animal health and public health by means of the more rapid and accurate traceability of bovine animals.

It is therefore proposed to amend the current identification system by providing for the voluntary introduction of electronic identification of bovines, with each Member State having the option to make this compulsory on its territory.

Under the voluntary system, bovine animals would be able to be identified by means of two conventional ear tags (current system) or by a clearly visible mark and one electronic identifier (i.e. an electronic ear tag or a bolus) conforming to EU-harmonised standards that have been officially approved.

In case the Member State opts for the mandatory regime, each bovine animal is to be identified by one conventional visible ear tag and one electronic identifier.

This proposal is being presented in parallel with the proposal for a directive to amend Council Directive 64/432/EEC as regards computer databases which are part of the surveillance networks in the Member States.

BUDGETARY IMPACT: the proposal has no impact on the Union's budget.

DELEGATED ACTS: the proposal contains provisions conferring on the Commission the right to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.