



The Consumer Voice in Europe

EU consumers have little appetite for cloning

Camille Perrin

Senior Food Policy Officer

European Parliament
Hearing on Animal Cloning for Food Supply
23rd February 2015
BEUC-X-2015-018

BEUC in a nutshell



- The European Consumer Organisation
- Umbrella organisation for 40 strong national consumer organisations, from 31 European countries
- Mission = to promote consumer interests in EU decision making
- Among our work priorities: **“Safe and healthy food for informed consumers”**

Europeans' attitudes toward animal cloning ...



- Two Eurobarometer surveys (2008 & 2010) found EU consumers **overwhelmingly disapprove of cloning for food supply**
 - **84%** had concerns over long-term effects on nature
 - **58%** found cloning totally unacceptable for food production (2008) (*figure hiked to 67% in 2010*)
 - **2/3** agreed there are ethical grounds for rejecting animal cloning
 - **69%** agreed cloning would risk treating animals as commodities
 - **83%** said they would want food from clones' offspring to be labelled if it were to become available in EU supermarkets

... and they are not the only ones

- International Food Information Council, 2007
 - **53%** of Americans **unlikely to buy** meat, milk and eggs from cloned animals even if FDA determines such products are safe (**51% for food from offspring**)
- Consumers Union, 2007
 - **89%** of US consumers want meat and milk derived from cloned animals to be labelled
 - **69%** of US consumers are concerned about eating milk or meat from cloned animals
- Opinion Research Corporation for American Anti-Vivisection Society, 2006
 - **66% disapprove of cloning for food** (only 27% approved of it)
 - **46%** have **ethical or moral objections** to cloning animals for food
- Center for Food, Nutrition, and Agricultural Policy, 2006
 - **66%** of Americans **uncomfortable using cloning** techniques to reproduce animals

Livestock cloning globally

- No commercial cloning of livestock animals in the EU and **none expected before 2020** (source: ICF-GHK study)
- Commercial cloning concentrated in the **US, Canada and Argentina**. Some activity in New Zealand, Australia, Chile, China, Paraguay, Uruguay and South Korea (source: ICF-GHK study)
 - Cloning mostly applied to **beef and dairy cattle**
 - Also applied to porcine animals (US, China?, NZ?) but to a much lesser extent
 - Cloning of ovine and caprine animals largely uncommon (started in the US but at very small scale)

Traceability of clones (I)

- Most third countries **do not regulate food from clones** – with a small exception:
 - **Canada** considers food from clones and their progeny as ‘novel food’ and requires **pre-market safety assessment**
- Third countries do not distinguish between clones and conventionally-bred animals but still:
 - **New-Zealand** has mandatory **identification and registration** system in place for clones (to cope with potential requests from foreign markets)
 - **Private initiatives** in Canada, US, Brazil
- Traceability of **reproductive material**:
 - **Individual identification already enabled** in the EU for all semen and embryos
 - Private sector agreements with US/Canada **already identify clone reproductive material**
- In the EU, individual traceability for bovine animals, sheep and goats. Pigs traceable on a batch basis.

Traceability of clones (II)

<u>Name of Association</u>	<u>Rules</u>
BEEF	Register Clone status in Pedigree
American Angus Association	<u>Yes</u>
Beefmaster Breeders United	<u>Yes</u>
American Akaushi Association	<u>Yes</u>
American Brahman Breeders Association	<u>Yes</u>
American Chianina Association	<u>Yes</u>
American Gelbvieh Association	<u>YES</u>
North American Limousin Foundation	<u>Yes</u>
American Maine-Anjou Association	Maybe
Red Angus Association of America	<u>Yes</u>
American Red Brangus Association	Yes
American Salers Association	Maybe
Santa Gertrudis Breeders International	<u>Maybe</u>
Senepol Cattle Breeders Association	Maybe
American Shorthorn Association	<u>Yes</u>
American Simmental Association	<u>Yes</u>
Texas Longhorn Breeders Association of America	<u>Yes</u>
American Hereford Association	<u>Yes</u>
DAIRY	
Holstein Association, USA Inc.	<u>Yes</u>
American Guernsey Association	<u>Yes</u>
American Jersey Cattle Association	<u>Yes</u>
Brown Swiss Cattle Breeder's Association of the U.S.A., Inc.	<u>Yes</u>

Source: Comments from Jaydee Hanson, Senior Policy Analyst for Cloning and Genetically Engineered Animals To National Organic Program, US Department of Agriculture September 20, 2011

EU consumers expectations not met by EC 2013 proposals



- Today in the EU: food from clones has 'novel food' status and requires pre-market approval.

→ *No specific rules apply for food from cloned animals' offspring and descendants, which can be sold unwittingly to consumers.*

- EC proposals of December 2013 disappointing for consumers:
 - Consumers will remain in the dark regarding food from clones' offspring and descendants
 - Consumers' ethical concerns disregarded
 - Cloned animals anyway not meant for food but for reproduction, unlike their progeny



JOINT STATEMENT ON ANIMAL CLONING FOR LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

Intergovernmental meetings to continue exchanges regarding the regulatory and trade-related aspects of livestock cloning in agriculture and food production took place in Buenos Aires in December 2010 and March 2011.

The Governments through their representatives identified below recognize the increasing pressure being put on limited resources to meet the growing challenges to food security, the importance of innovation for agriculture, and the essential role that agricultural technologies play in addressing these challenges of meeting the demands of a growing world population.

They also note that regulations for somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT) livestock cloning, as with other technologies in the agrifood sector, may impact trade and technology transfer, and accordingly invite other Governments to consider supporting this document.

The following points are identified:

1. Regulatory approaches related to agricultural technologies should be science-based, and no more trade-restrictive than necessary to fulfill legitimate objectives, and should be consistent with international obligations.
2. Expert scientific bodies around the world have reviewed the effects of SCNT cloning on animal health and the safety of food derived from livestock clones. There has been no evidence indicating that food from clones or the progeny of clones is any less safe than food from conventionally bred livestock.
3. The sexually-reproduced progeny of SCNT clones are not clones. These progeny are the same as any other sexually-reproduced animal of their own species. There is no scientifically justifiable basis for imposing a regulatory differentiation between the progeny of clones and other animals of the species.
4. Restrictions specifically aimed at food from the progeny of clones – such as bans or labeling requirements – could have negative impacts on international trade.
5. Any audit and enforcement measure addressed to progeny of clones would be impossible to apply legitimately and would result in onerous, disproportionate and unwarranted burdens on livestock producers.

Trade aspects of cloning

- According to EC impact assessment:
 - Imports of live animals < 0.01% of EU's livestock
 - **Imports of (mostly bovine) reproductive material account for 2.5% on average of EU's use of reproductive material**
 - **EU imports of meat and dairy products also relatively low (<5%), except for sheep and goat meat (20%, essentially from New Zealand) but cloning uncommon for these species**

→ *Tracking imported live clones and imported clone reproductive material would be feasible in the EU*

- Concerns voiced by **EU trading partners**
 - Impact of CETA and TTIP trade negotiations?

BEUC position (I)

- **Consumers should be able to make informed choices** when it comes to purchasing and consuming food derived from cloned animals' progeny.
- As the minimum, we wish to see:
 - a **ban on animal cloning** in the EU for food production; on **food from cloned animals**; on **imports of clones into the EU** for food production;
 - a **traceability system for semen and embryos** from cloned animals and for the **live offspring of cloned animals**;
 - **labelling requirements** for fresh meat of cloned animals' offspring

BEUC position (II)

- Pressure from its trading partners **should not prevent the EU from adopting rules on cloning in line with its citizens' demand.**
- 2011 leaked opinion from Council legal services revealed labelling requirements for food from cloned animals' offspring **could be compatible with WTO and GATT rules**
- Rather than an obstacle, TTIP should be the opportunity for the EU and the US to **adopt rules on animal cloning for food in the interest of consumers** on both sides of the Atlantic:
 - **Both EU and US consumer groups** have long called for mandatory labelling and traceability of clones and their progeny to allow for informed consumer food choices (**TACD resolution**)

Useful references

- BEUC position paper on animal cloning for food http://www.beuc.org/publications/beuc-x-2014-076_cpe_beuc_position_paper_on_cloning.pdf
- 2008 Flash Eurobarometer on Europeans' attitudes towards animal cloning http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_238_en.pdf
- 2010 Special Eurobarometer on Biotechnology http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_341_en.pdf
- ICF-GHK study for DG SANCO, Dec. 2012 http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/novelfood/documents/cloning_final_report_ghk_en.pdf
- http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/files/hanson-cattle-pedigrees-can-be-used-to-track-clones_69316.pdf
- European Commission impact assessment report http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/novelfood/documents/cloning_impact_assessment_report_en.pdf
- https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/Joint_Statement_on_Animal_Cloning_for_Livestock_Production.pdf
- <http://www.euractiv.com/cap/cloning-news-504753>
- <http://test.tacd.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/TACD-FOOD-28-07-Food-Products-from-Cloned-Animals.pdf>

Thank you



The Consumer Voice in Europe

 @beuctweet

www.beuc.eu – food@beuc.eu

Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs AISBL | Der Europäische Verbraucherverband
Rue d'Arlon 80, B-1040 Brussels • Tel. +32 (0)2 743 15 90

