

# European Communities

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# Working Documents

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DOCUMENT 1-49/82

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on the Environment,  
Public Health and Consumer Protection

on the proposals from the Commission of the European  
Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-586/81 - COM(81) 503,  
496, 504, 497, 501 and 500 final) concerning fresh meat

Rapporteur : Mrs KROUWEL-VLAM

PE 76.095/fin.



By letter of 7 October 1981 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament to deliver an opinion on the proposals from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council on fresh meat.

The President of the European Parliament referred proposals I, II, V, VI and VII (COM(81) 503 final, COM(81) 496 final, COM(81) 497 final, COM(81) 501 final and COM(81) 500 final, respectively) to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Agriculture for its opinion and proposals III and IV (COM(81) 504 final) to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection.

On 28 October 1981 the committee appointed Mrs Krouwel-Vlam rapporteur.

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection considered these proposals at its meetings of 4 December 1981, 27 January and 18 March 1982. At this last meeting it unanimously adopted the amended proposals I to VI, proposal VII and the draft report.

The following took part in the vote : Mr Collins, chairman; Mr Johnson, vice-chairman; Mrs Krouwel-Vlam, rapporteur, Mr Alber, Mr Bombard, Mr Eisma (deputizing for Mrs Spaak), Mr Forth, Mr Ghergo, Miss Hooper, Mrs Lentz-Cornette, Mr Mertens (deputizing for Mr Verroken), Mr Muntingh, Mr Pantazi, Mr Remilly, Mrs Schleicher, Mrs Seibel-Emmerling, Mr Sherlock and Mrs Van Hemeldonck.

The opinion of the Committee on Agriculture is attached to this report.

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The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection hereby submits to the European Parliament the following amendments, motion for a resolution and explanatory statement :

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

TEXT OF THE PROPOSAL FROM THE  
COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

- I Proposal for a Council Directive on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in fresh meat (COM(81) 503 final)

AMENDMENT No. 1

Article 3

- 1.E The date of packaging must be indicated on fresh meat which is packed in high vacuum or in a controlled atmosphere.

AMENDMENT No 2

Article 3

- 2.(c) to fresh meat introduced by authorization of the country of destination intended exclusively for the supply of (deletion) military forces stationed in its territory but not under its flag in so far as this meat complies with Community animal health requirements. The Member State shall ensure that this meat is not placed in free circulation.

Article 3

- 2.(c) to fresh meat introduced by authorization of the country of destination intended exclusively for the supply of international organizations, and military forces stationed in its territory but not under its flag in so far as this meat complies with Community animal health requirements. The Member State shall ensure that this meat is not placed in free circulation.

AMENDMENT No 3

Article 3

2.(d) to meat obtained in accordance with the rules of the Member States of production that complies with Community animal health requirements:

- unchanged

- unchanged

- unchanged

- deleted

Article 3

2.(d) to meat obtained in accordance with the rules of the Member States of production:

- forming part of travellers' personal luggage and intended for their personal consumption in so far as the amount or quantity transported does not exceed 5 kg per person;

- sent as small packages to private persons provided that such meat is not imported by way of trade, in so far as the quantity sent does not exceed 5 kg;

- for consumption by the crew and passengers on means of transport operating commercially between Member States;

- the meat mentioned above shall comply with Community animal health requirements.

AMENDMENT No 4

Article 3

3. The official veterinarian may, when carrying out the ante mortem inspection referred to in 1.A.(b), and also in this case the Environmental Health Officer or meat inspector with adequate and relevant qualification, the post mortem inspection referred to in 1.A.(d), the supervision referred to in 1.B.(d) and 1.D.(c) and supervision of the requirements of Annex I, Chapter XIV, be helped by trained assistants placed under his responsibility.

Article 3

3. The official veterinarian may, when carrying out the ante mortem inspection referred to in 1.A.(b), the post mortem inspection referred to in 1.A.(d), the supervision referred to in 1.B.(d) and 1.D.(c) and supervision of the requirements of Annex I, Chapter XIV, be helped by trained assistants placed under his authority.

AMENDMENT No 5

Article 3

4.(b) fresh meat from animals to which have been administered substances which have not been proved harmless in the event of human consumption of such meat with the exception of the provisions of paragraph 5;

Article 3

4.(b) fresh meat containing residues of substances in levels which are harmful or likely to make the consumption of fresh meat dangerous or harmful to human health;

AMENDMENT No 6

Article 3

- 4.(c) fresh meat containing residues of substances artificially administered which have not been proved harmless in the event of human consumption, with the exception of the provisions of paragraph 5;

Article 3

- 4.(c) fresh meat from animals to which have been administered tenderizers or substances likely to make the fresh meat dangerous or harmful to human health;

AMENDMENT No 7

Article 3

5. To ensure uniform application of the requirements of paragraph 4, a list shall be drawn up following the procedure laid down in Article 13 of permitted substances, excluding all other substances, which may occur in fresh meat. Additional provisions may also be adopted.

Article 3

5. Following the procedure laid down in Article 13 additional provisions may be adopted to ensure uniform application of the requirements of paragraph 4.

AMENDMENT No 8

Article 9

Pending entry into force of a directive on the defrayal of expenditure incurred by the execution of veterinary inspections, the costs incurred by the inspections required by this directive shall be borne by the Member States.

Article 9

All expenditure incurred by the execution of the veterinary inspection by the Member States in establishments required by this Directive shall be apportioned between all slaughtered animals and chargeable to the owner of the meat or his agent; without repayment by the public funds directly or indirectly

AMENDMENT No 9

Article 12

4. .... a qualified majority. The Commission shall inform Parliament thereof without delay.

Article 12

4. The Commission shall adopt the measures and implement them immediately where they are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee. Where they are not in accordance with the opinion of the Committee or if no opinion is delivered, the Commission shall without delay propose to the Council the measures to be adopted. The Council shall adopt the measures by a qualified majority.

AMENDMENT No 10

Article 13

4. §.....

If, within three months from the date on which the proposal was submitted to it, the Council has not adopted any measures, the Commission shall adopt the proposed measures and apply them immediately, after informing Parliament thereof, save where the Council has decided against these measures by a simple majority.

Article 13

4. ....

If, within three months from the date on which the proposal was submitted to it, the Council has not adopted any measures, the Commission shall adopt the proposed measures and apply them immediately, save where the Council has decided against these measures by a simple majority.



II Proposal for a Council Directive amending Council Directive 72/462/EEC on health and veterinary inspection problems upon importation of bovine animals and swine and fresh meat from third countries (COM(81) 496 final)

AMENDMENT No 11

Article 1

6(a) Add the following to Article 16:

'The date of packaging must be indicated on fresh meat which is packed in high vacuum or in a controlled atmosphere.'

AMENDMENT No. 12

Article 1

7. The official veterinarian or the meat inspector with adequate and relevant qualification may,...., be helped by assistants placed under his responsibility

Article 1

7. The official veterinarian may,...., be helped by assistants placed under his authority.

AMENDMENT No. 13

Article 1

12. Article 34

.....  
To the extent that these Agreements are not compatible with this Directive, the Member State or States concerned shall avail themselves of all appropriate means to remove the incompatibilities noted. However, prior authorization from the Commission is required for the extension or conclusion of such agreements.

Article 34

.....  
To the extent that these Agreements are not compatible with this Directive, the Member State or States concerned shall avail themselves of all appropriate means to remove the incompatibilities noted.

- III Proposal for a Council directive amending Directive 71/118/EEC on health problems affecting trade in fresh poultrymeat in respect of personnel responsible for carrying out health inspections, supervision and control tasks (COM(81) 504 final)

AMENDMENT No. 14

3rd recital

- 'Whereas in the United Kingdom the Environmental Health Officer or meat inspector with adequate and relevant qualification is recognized as having a qualification suitable to carry out these particular tasks;'

3rd recital

- 'Whereas in the United Kingdom the Environmental Health Officer is recognized as having a qualification suitable to carry out these particular tasks;'

AMENDMENT No. 15

Article 1

Amend Directive 71/118/EEC as follows:

1. In Article 16a, sub-paragraph (b), the second indent or part of the sentence is replaced by the following text:  
'As regards the supervision of cutting premises and storage the intervention of an official veterinarian, Environmental Health Officer or meat inspector with adequate and relevant qualification...' (rest unchanged)

Article 1

Amend Directive 71/118/EEC as follows:

1. In Article 16a, sub-paragraph (b), the second indent or part of the sentence is replaced by the following text :  
'As regards the supervision of cutting premises and storage the intervention of an official veterinarian as provided by this Directive, ....'

- IV Proposal for a Council directive concerning the qualifications of the personnel responsible for carrying out health inspection, supervision and control tasks foreseen by Directive 77/99/EEC on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in meat products (COM(81) 504 final)
- 

AMENDMENT No. 16

4th recital

'Whereas in the United Kingdom the qualification of the Environmental Health Officer or the meat inspector with adequate and relevant qualification is so recognized; (rest unchanged)

4th recital

'Whereas in the United Kingdom the qualification of the Environmental Health Officer is so recognized; (rest unchanged)

- V Proposal for a Council Directive on the notification of animal disease within the Community (COM(81) 497 final)
- 

AMENDMENT No 17

Article 6

Article 6

4. ...save where the Council has decided by a simple majority against those measures. The Commission shall inform Parliament thereof without delay.

4. ...save where the Council has decided by a simple majority against those measures.

- VI. Proposal for a Council Directive on health problems relating to residues of antibiotics in fresh meat of Community origin  
(COM(81) 501 final)
- 

AMENDMENT No 18

Article 4

- 2.(3) their slaughter for human consumption is prohibited until it can be demonstrated that the residues present no longer exceed the tolerance, and in any case until the end of the withdrawal period fixed for each residue in Annex I to this Directive,

Article 4

- 2.(3) their slaughter for human consumption is prohibited until it may be assumed that the residues present no longer exceed the tolerance, and in any case until the end of the withdrawal period fixed for each residue in Annex I to this Directive,

AMENDMENT No 19

Article 7

Pending entry into force of a directive on the defrayal of expenditure incurred by the execution of veterinary inspections, the costs of analysis of samples for the detection of antibiotic residues shall be borne by the Member State.

(Rest unchanged)

Article 7

The costs of analysis of samples for the detection of antibiotic residues shall be apportioned among the total of slaughtered animals and shall be borne by the persons having the power of disposition of the abovementioned animals.

AMENDMENT No 20

Article 9

4. ... against these measures by a simple majority. The Commission shall inform Parliament thereof without delay.

Article 9

4. ... against these measures by a simple majority.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposals from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council on fresh meat.

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposals from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council<sup>1</sup>,
  - having been consulted by the Council (Doc. 1-586/81),
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection and the opinion of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-49/82 ),
1. Welcomes the veterinary proposals, which are intended to achieve the highest possible degree of harmonization of divergent national regulations in the interests of public health and of consumers in the Community;
  2. Expects the Commission to extend and, where possible, to simplify this legislation in the veterinary field with a view to establishing complete freedom of intra-Community trade;
  3. Would welcome a situation where the minimum requirements relating to slaughter and sectioning were such as also to encourage medium-sized undertakings to make the necessary improvements enabling them to fulfil the requirements and thus engage in international trade;
  4. Requests the Commission to submit as soon as possible a proposal amending the directive and establishing fixed criteria for microbiological controls;
  5. Calls on the Commission to establish and standardize the procedures for taking samples and conducting analyses as soon as possible as this is the only way to ensure a uniform system of supervision for the detection of antibiotic residues;
  6. Requests the Commission to ensure that all third countries which export meat or animals to the Member States notify the Commission, under the same conditions laid down in this directive (Proposal V), of any cases of the diseases listed in Annex A;
  7. Requests the Commission to report to the European Parliament on implementation of the respective directives one year after their entry into force, and also to inform it of the harmonization still required and which has already been considered in the veterinary field and in the health field;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ No.

8. Requests the Commission to submit within one year a proposal for a directive on cost allocation in respect of all veterinary controls and inspections;
9. Approves proposal VII for a directive amending Directive 71/118/EEC on health problems affecting trade in fresh poultrymeat (COM(81) 504 final);
10. Requests however, the Commission to incorporate the foregoing amendments in its proposal pursuant to Article 149, second paragraph of the EEC Treaty.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTI. INTRODUCTION

I.1. The aim of the Commission proposals discussed below is to make Community trade in fresh meat freer and to ensure the maintenance of the strict standards of hygiene required for the protection of public health.

I.2. They represent an attempt to review, consolidate and adapt existing legislation to take account of developments in technology and to propose alternative solutions without putting the standards of hygiene required for the protection of public health at risk.

I.3. The Commission has therefore presented the proposals discussed below, as well as three further proposals which will be considered separately or for which the Committee on Agriculture is responsible. These other three proposals concern:

1. The laying down of general criteria for methods of microbiological control (Doc. 1-574/81)
2. The protection of laying hens kept in cages (Doc. 1-452/81)  
(committee responsible: Committee on Agriculture)
3. The two-year extension of the programme for the rapid eradication of tuberculosis, brucellosis and bovine leucosis  
(committee responsible: Committee on Agriculture).  
(Doc. 1-726/81)

II. COMMENTS ON THE SEVEN PROPOSALS PRESENTED TO THE COUNCILII.1. Directive on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in fresh meat (COM(81) 503 final)

II.1.1. This directive repeals the existing directive (64/433/EEC), which was adopted in 1964 and has been amended many times. It also introduces important changes and takes account of alternative solutions with regard to special conditions for the approval of slaughterhouses.

II.1.2. These amendments concern:

- (a) the principle of an inspection of meat during production;
- (b) the principle that the costs connected with this inspection are borne by the product;
- (c) inspection of slaughterhouses by Community inspectors;
- (d) introduction of microbiological control methods;
- (e) official veterinarian to be assisted by specially trained personnel.



II.1.3. Certain points were not altogether clear, in particular:

- (a) the scope of the directive as defined in Article 1;
- (b) the exact definition of the uses of fresh meat other than for human consumption in Article 3(2)(a);
- (c) the problem of administering tenderisers to fresh meat (Article 3(4)(c));
- (d) the laying down by the Standing Veterinary Committee of methods of microbiological control, sampling plan and so on (Article 4(2)(d));
- (e) consultation of the European Parliament whenever the measures to be adopted are not in accordance with the opinion of the Standing Veterinary Committee (Article 13 (4));

II.2. Directive 72/462/EEC on health and veterinary inspection problems upon importation of bovine animals and swine and fresh meat from third countries (COM(81) 496 final)

II.2.1. The main aims of this amendment are as follows:

- (a) to apply at least the same requirements to third countries as those applied to intra-Community trade in fresh meat;
- (b) to simplify the system of certificates for the import of fresh meat by making the health certificate and the certificate of approval into one document;
- (c) to make it possible for the official veterinarian to be assisted by specially trained personnel, with appropriate safeguards;
- (d) to replace the voluminous Annex B, which would have to be amended anyway to take account of the amendments to certain articles. This annex covers the general conditions for the approval of establishments.

II.2.2. Annex B is identical to Annex I of the original directive. Would it not be possible simply to refer to Annex I instead of reproducing it in full in this directive?

II.3. Directive amending Directive 71/118/EEC on health problems affecting trade in fresh poultrymeat in respect of the personnel responsible for carrying out health inspection, supervision and control tasks (COM(81) 504 final)

II.3.1. This amendment to the directive is intended to take account of the special situation in the United Kingdom and provides, on the basis of a report from the Commission to the Council concerning the training of 'Environment Health Officers' in the UK, that officials who have not had veterinary training may perform these tasks provided that they work under the supervision of a veterinarian.

II.4. Directive concerning the qualifications of personnel responsible for carrying out health inspection, supervision and control tasks foreseen by Directive 77/99/EEC on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in meat products (COM(81) 504 final)

II.4.1. The principle established in II.3.1. in the case of poultry Directive 71/118/EEC with regard to health inspection, supervision and control tasks, also applies here.

II.5. Directive on the notification of animal diseases within the Community (COM(81) 497 final)

II.5.1. The object of this directive is to introduce harmonized arrangements for the notification of animal disease (see Annex A) which operate reliably and rapidly and to ensure close collaboration between the services of the Commission and national bodies.

II.5.2. The principle that a declaration must be made in the case of certain contagious diseases is already enshrined in the Community's directive on trade. This proposal for a directive consolidates the above principle and lays down the regulations implementing it.

II.6. Directive on health problems relating to residues of antibiotics and substances with a similar action in trade in fresh meat of Community origin (COM(81) 501 final)

II.6.1. This directive comes in response to a request by the European Parliament in its debate on the hormone directive.

II.6.2. It provides in principle for a verification of the absence of detectable quantities of antibiotic residues in meat and for the cost of such controls to be borne by the product. At the same time it envisages the introduction of controls at Community level to ensure uniform application over the whole Community.

II.6.3. The principle of zero tolerance is an important one. Some question marks remain, however, concerning the extent of the Community's powers of supervision, the use of antibiotics, the withdrawal periods given in Annex I in the event of a suspension of slaughter, the ban on administering human antibiotics to animals and the increasingly widespread occurrence of pathogenic bacteria multiresistant to antibiotics.

II.7. Directive amending Directive 71/118/EEC on health problems affecting trade in fresh poultrymeat (COM(81) 500 final)

II.7.1. The purpose of this amendment to the directive is to have microbiological examinations carried out in order to guarantee the proper hygienic quality of the product. It also covers checks on the proper functioning of the chilling installation in which carcasses are chilled by immersion in water.

II.7.2. It is a little premature, however, to lay down microbiological criteria until a study has been conducted. One might therefore ask whether there is any point in assessing the results of the microbiological examination by comparing them with the findings of previous tests. It must also be made clear whether the European Parliament has to be consulted as set out in point II.1.3.(e) to determine the methods of microbiological control.

### III. COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

#### Proposals I and II

III.1. Amendments Nos. 1 and 11 were tabled by the Committee on Agriculture and incorporated as such.

III.2. In the exceptional cases provided for in Article 3, paragraph 2(c), in which the provisions of Articles 1 and 2 do not apply, it is proposed that only supplies for military forces stationed in the territory of the country of destination but not under its flag should be exempt, unless the term international organizations can be more clearly defined.

III.3. Amendments Nos 3 and 4 to Article 3, paragraph 2(d) and paragraph (3) are intended only to make the text clearer.

III.4. In proposing amendments to Article 3, paragraphs 4 and 5 (amendments 5, 6 and 7), the committee is opting for a positive list of substances to be drawn up in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 13 and which would thus contain only substances whose innocuity had been demonstrated. In this context, the first concern is to determine which substances and residues thereof are permitted. The list of permitted substances would then be appended in an annex.

III.5. The committee is also of the opinion, as is in fact proposed by the Committee on Agriculture, that the expenditure incurred by the execution of obligatory veterinary inspections should be borne by the Member States. It is unacceptable that these costs should be passed on in full to the consumer through one or a number of products. In this connection, the committee feels there is a need for a separate horizontal directive establishing arrangements for the defrayal of costs arising from this and all other directives relating to veterinary inspections. This is the purpose of amendment No 8 to Article 9.

III.6. The amendments to Articles 12 and 13 are designed to ensure respect for what the committee considers to be the European Parliament's legitimate right to be informed when implementing provisions of this directive are blocked by the Council. A similar amendment has been made to proposals COM(81) 497 final and 501 final.

## Proposal VI

III.7. Besides the stricter procedure proposed in Article 4, namely that it should be proved and not assumed that the residues present no longer exceed the tolerance, the amendment from the Committee on Agriculture regarding the distribution of costs has also been incorporated into Article 7.

## IV. CONCLUSION

The seven abovementioned proposals are to enter into force as follows: twelve months after notification in the case of the first, on 1 January 1982 in the case of the second and fifth proposals and on 1 July 1982 in the case of the third, fourth, sixth and seventh proposals. It might justifiably be asked whether there is not a case for dealing with all the proposals together. A number of dates need in any case to be adjusted. Subject to the amendments proposed, the committee approves the abovementioned proposals. However, it regrets that the proposals, which can be regarded as a necessary follow-up to existing legislation, were not submitted earlier.

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Draftsman: Mr HELMS

On 20 October 1981 the Committee on Agriculture appointed Mr Helms draftsman.

The committee considered the draft opinion at its meetings of 1/2 December 1981 and 4/5 February 1982 and at the last meeting adopted it unanimously with nine abstentions.

The following took part in the vote: Sir Henry Plumb, chairman; Mr Colleselli, vice-chairman; Mr Delatte, vice-chairman; Mr Helms, draftsman; Mr Battersby, Mr Dalsass, Mrs Desouche (deputizing for Mrs Herklotz), Mr Eyraud, Mr Gatto, Mr Gautier, Mr Hord, Mr Howell (deputizing for Mr Kirk), Mr Maher, Mr Marck, Mr d'Ormesson, Mrs Péry (deputizing for Mr Sutra), Mr Provan, Miss Quin, Mr Stella, (deputizing for Mr Diana), Mr Thareau and Mr Vernimmen

I. (COM(81) 503 final)

1. This proposal for a directive is intended to replace Directive 64/433/EEC of 26 June 1964 on health problems in intra-Community trade in fresh meat<sup>1</sup>, which has been amended many times. Its aim is to achieve a closer approximation of the health provisions of the various Member States.
2. The progress made in the fields of science and technology since the entry into force of Directive 64/433/EEC, has made it possible to improve the hygienic production, inspection and supervision of fresh meat. The proposal for a directive lays down for the first time Community rules for the approval of establishments used for storing fresh meat (Article 4) and, also for the first time, makes horsemeat and offal from slaughter as well as smaller cuts of fresh meat intended for direct sale to the consumer subject to Community health provisions (Article 3 (1)(B)).

The despatch of fresh meat to another Member State is to be prohibited if it is suspected of being unfit for human consumption (e.g. because of a high level of residues, treatment by radiation, etc.) (Article 3(4)). Random inspections by the competent authorities of the Member States - independently of the inspections provided for in Article 4 (hygiene in establishments) and Article 5 (inspection by the Commission) - are intended to ensure that meat which is unfit for human consumption does not reach the consumer (Article 6).

The cost of veterinary inspections by the Member States is to be apportioned among all slaughtered animals and thus borne by the product (Article 9).

The purpose of these measures is to ensure that imports of fresh meat from third countries are not treated more favourably under national provisions than intra-Community trade in fresh meat prior to the entry into force of Community rules governing such imports (see proposal for a directive under II) (Article 11).

The implementation of the directive in the Member States is monitored by means of regular inspections by the Commission (slaughterhouse inspectors, Article 5).

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<sup>1</sup>OJ 121 of 29.7.1964, p. 2012/64

3. The Committee on Agriculture welcomes the proposed revision of the directive because it takes account of the need for higher standards of hygiene and consumer protection. It will also mean more progress in the dismantling of the barriers to intra-Community trade in fresh meat resulting from differences in health legislation; this will be conducive to free competition between producers in the Community.

Another provision which is both welcome and necessary is that national rules on the import of fresh meat from third countries must not be more favourable than the corresponding Community provisions on intra-Community trade. The Commission has already submitted to the Council a proposal for a directive amending Directive 72/462/EEC on health and veterinary inspection problems upon importation of bovine animals and swine and fresh meat from third countries (COM(81) 496 final - see under II), which brings the existing health provisions on the treatment of fresh meat into line with the most recent scientific and technological developments.

4. Pursuant to Articles 9 and 4 of the proposed directive the costs of veterinary control of establishments are to be apportioned among all slaughtered animals and thus incorporated in the price of the product. This means that the costs will be borne by the owner of the meat, since there is no provision for them to be reimbursed from public funds.

This arrangement could affect consumer prices and hence also competition in the community, since differences in the cost of veterinary control of establishments could lead to differences in the price of fresh meat from one Member State to another.

The Committee on Agriculture nevertheless approves the proposal that the product should bear the costs, since this will ensure that, in the long run and without involving expenditure from the national budgets, slaughterhouse owners will adhere strictly to health provisions and make the necessary improvements in standards of hygiene. Meat producers will in fact give preference to establishments with a high level of compliance with the health provisions, since they will not be subjected to frequent - and costly - controls.

- 4a. The Committee on Agriculture also feels that the date of packaging should be indicated on packed fresh meat so that both the trader and the consumer can themselves assess the freshness of the meat.



II. (COM(81) 496 final)

5. Directive 72/462/EEC covers health and veterinary inspection problems upon importation of bovine animals and swine and fresh meat from third countries. The important feature of this directive is that it lays down the conditions under which imports into and free trade in the Community are permitted and sets minimum standards of hygiene and animal health which are indispensable for the protection of consumers and of the Community herd.
6. The abovementioned directive was adopted on 12 December 1972. Advances in science and technology have led to improvements in veterinary supervision with regard to tuberculosis and brucellosis and in the hygienic production, inspection and supervision of fresh meat. The proposed amendments to the directive take these improvements into account as well as the experience gained in the application of the provisions of the directive (on veterinary controls) in third countries.
7. The amendment of the directive is related to the proposal for a revision of Council Directive 64/433/EEC on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in fresh meat (COM(81) 503 final - see above under I). Under the proposed amendment to Directive 72/462/EEC the minimum hygiene requirements laid down in the former directive are also intended to apply to the importation of bovine animals and swine and fresh meat from third countries.
8. To take account of technological developments in the packing of fresh meat, meat wrapped in high vacuum is also to be considered as fresh meat (Article 1(1) of the proposal for a directive).

The special conditions for the approval of slaughterhouses in third countries with regard to the equipping of premises for preparing and cleaning offal and other by-products may be waived if the premises satisfy comparable alternative animal health requirements. The same applies to the medical certificate of health for persons coming into contact with meat and to the veterinary inspection of solipeds (Article 1(2) of the proposal for a directive).

The Commission will publish a specimen of the health mark which is officially approved in the third countries and complies with the requirements of the directive (Annex B, Chapter X) (Article 1(2) of the proposal for a directive).

Bovine animals may be imported only from those third countries which have been free for 12 months (instead of the earlier period of 6 months) from blue-tongue disease (Article 1(3) of the proposal for a directive).

In individual cases the Standing Veterinary Committee may allow derogations from the provisions on tuberculosis and brucellosis in bovine animals and swine (Annex A) if the third country concerned recognizes and complies with equivalent alternative provisions on veterinary inspection (Article 1(4) of the proposal for a directive).

The Standing Veterinary Committee may decide on a case-by-case basis that the animal health certificate may be incorporated with the public health certificate (Article 22 of the original directive - Article 1(10) of the proposal for a directive). Where it is not possible to return animals which cannot be admitted for trade in the Community, an order must be given for them to be slaughtered (Article 1(6) of the proposal for a directive).

9. The Committee on Agriculture feels that the Commission proposal will help to simplify further the rules to be observed and measures to be taken upon import, and thereby facilitate the free movement of the imported animals and products within the Community. The updating of the regulations in the field of hygiene and animal health is also dictated by the desire to improve intra-Community trade (revision of Directive 64/433/EEC, see under I) and will help above all to protect the consumer.

Furthermore, the Committee on Agriculture welcomes the fact that the directive leaves sufficient room for alternative - but equally effective - hygiene measures and supervision procedures, where the effectiveness of such measures in the slaughterhouses concerned is guaranteed or where the third country in question applies comparable veterinary inspection provisions. This allows of greater flexibility vis-à-vis third countries while at the same time preserving Community interests.

- 9a. This proposal for a directive should also ensure that the date of packaging is indicated on packed fresh meat (see point 4a.).

### III. (COM(81) 497 final)

10. This proposal for a directive links up with the existing provisions on notification of animal disease in the various directives on trade in bovine animals and swine, fresh meat, fresh poultrymeat and meat products, which make it mandatory for each Member State to notify each other Member State and the Commission of the outbreak and disappearance of animal diseases.

11. There are no Community provisions, however, on the procedure for notification or on the content or frequency of the reports. Consequently, Member States have seldom been in a position in the past to act on these reports effectively and without unduly affecting trade.
12. Under the proposal for a directive both the diseases listed in Annex A and new, naturally transmissible diseases must be notified to the Commission and each of the Member States by telex within 24 hours, giving the information required in Annex B (Articles 1 and 3).

Secondary outbreaks of the notified diseases must be reported to the Commission at weekly intervals; the Commission forwards a composite notification to the veterinary headquarters of each Member State (Article 4).

The code form by which the information required in Annex B (Article 6) is to be transmitted shall be drawn up by the Standing Veterinary Committee procedure; where necessary this procedure may also be used for amendments to Annexes A and B and - on a temporary basis - to the procedure for notification of disease (Article 5).

13. The Committee on Agriculture welcomes the proposal for a directive because it represents a further step on the road to the harmonization of provisions and measures on animal disease in intra-Community trade. Animal diseases are a danger for the Community herd and can lead to serious disruption of intra-Community trade in live animals, fresh meat and meat products. A prompt and sufficiently detailed notification of disease will make it possible for the other Member States to take the immediate action which the situation requires. Unjustifiable over-reaction by the Member States can thus be avoided and trade will be restricted only to the extent which is genuinely necessary.
14. The Committee on Agriculture points out that the Council adopted a resolution on measures to be taken in the veterinary sector on 12 March 1968<sup>1</sup>, which made it clear that the objective of such measures must be free trade in animals and products of animal origin within the Community. The Council has a duty therefore to attain this objective and ensure that national veterinary provisions are brought into line at the most stringent level possible for the benefit of consumer protection

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<sup>1</sup>OJ C 22 of 18.3.1968, p. 18

IV. (COM(81) 501 final)

15. This proposal for a directive concerns the examination of fresh meat for residues of antibiotics and proposes the setting of a zero tolerance for such residues in order to protect the consumer; all meat which is slaughtered in the Community and is intended for human consumption is to be made subject to Community controls. This proposal by the Commission provides a response to the opinion expressed by the European Parliament on a proposal concerning the use of substances with a hormonal action and those having a thyrostatic action in domestic animals<sup>1</sup>, which drew attention to the need for a Community regulation.

The proposal links up with the existing Directive 64/433/EEC on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in fresh meat<sup>2</sup>, which inter alia makes the administering of antibiotics to slaughter animals subject to national regulations. The most recent proposal for a directive replacing this directive (see under I) already bans the despatch of fresh meat containing residues of substances (including antibiotics) harmful to human health.

16. The proposal provides for random examinations of all slaughtered meat, the frequency of such examinations being specified in Annex I. Where there is specific information to suggest the presence of residues, the official veterinarian must, furthermore, examine each slaughtered animal concerned (Article 3). If residues of antibiotics are found the slaughtered animal must be safely condemned (Article 5) and the competent veterinary authority must be informed. The Member States must then carry out further examinations to determine the origin of the residues, to identify the suspect animals in the herd from which the animal came and prohibit their slaughter for human consumption or disposal until the end of the withdrawal period fixed in Annex I (Article 4). The Member States must inform the Commission annually of the examinations carried out, their findings and the measures taken; the Commission in turn must inform each Member State of these results (Article 6). Furthermore, the Commission shall make on-the-spot checks to verify that the provisions of this directive are applied (Article 8).

The costs of the regular examinations for residues shall be apportioned among the total of slaughtered animals and shall be borne by the persons having the power of disposition of these animals; only where residues

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<sup>1</sup>Report by Mr BRØNDLUND NIELSEN on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture on three Commission proposals (Doc. 1-840/80)

<sup>2</sup>OJ No. 121 of 29.7.1964, p.2012, last amended by Directive 81/476/EEC - OJ No. L 186 of 8.7.1981.

of antibiotics have been detected, and where it is necessary to carry out a bacteriological examination of the meat, are the costs to be borne in full by the person having the power of disposition of the animals concerned (Article 7).

17. The Committee on Agriculture welcomes the proposal for a directive as an appropriate means of curbing the abuse of antibiotics in the rearing of slaughter animals. The revelation of excesses in the administering of antibiotics to slaughter animals has caused - and rightly so - considerable concern among the population, which was partly responsible for the boycott of fresh meat. The confidence of consumers and of responsible producers in the ability of the law to protect them was shattered; serious economic harm was caused by the consumer boycott and intra-Community trade in slaughter animals was adversely affected. The proposal for a directive is an appropriate means of re-establishing orderly practice with regard to the use of antibiotics which is necessary in the interests of public health, since every producer concerned would be taking the risk of incurring the costs involved in the safe condemnation of any meat found to contain residues, the mandatory examinations proposed make this risk a very real one and serve as a warning.

Consumer protection could be increased still further if the Council prohibited the systematic use of antibiotics which, when the meat has been consumed, produce a resistance in the human body.

18. The Committee on Agriculture has reservations, however, about apportioning the costs arising from random examinations among all slaughtered animals and thereby among the persons having the power of disposition. This would mean that it is ultimately the consumer who bears the cost instead of the producers whose practices have caused the examination to be carried out. Measured against this, the desire to protect the consumer, which might justify passing on the costs to the product, is of secondary importance. In fact, one could even justify apportioning all examination costs among the persons having disposition of those animals in which residues of antibiotics have been detected, neither the consumer nor the Member State would have to bear the cost of the examination in such a case. However, since this procedure would be interpreted as the imposition of a fine, the Committee on Agriculture feels that it is fairer that the cost of random examinations which reveal no residues be borne by the Member States and the cost of those examinations which prove positive be borne by the persons having disposition of the animals in question - as already provided for in the Commission's proposal for a directive.

V. (COM(81) 500 final)

19. The basic Directive 71/118/EEC<sup>1</sup> lays down the health requirements for slaughterhouses and cutting plants used for the production of fresh poultrymeat.

The proposal for a directive amending that directive introduces new provisions making it possible to carry out microbiological checks on standards of hygiene in slaughterhouses and cutting plants - on utensils, fittings and the meat itself - on the basis of the most recent scientific knowledge.

In addition, the regulations on the control of the 'counter-flow' process for the chilling of poultry carcasses by immersion set out in Annex I of the directive are also to be amended by establishing uniform criteria for the evaluation of microbial levels.

20. The Committee on Agriculture welcomes the introduction of microbiological controls in slaughterhouses and cutting plants as this will improve standards of hygiene in the production of fresh poultrymeat to the benefit of both the operators and the trade and also the consumer. The same applies to the improvement in the monitoring of microbial levels in poultry carcasses which are chilled by immersion in a counter-flow of water.
21. The Committee on Agriculture regrets, however, that it is not yet possible, because of the lack of suitable basic statistics, to lay down specific criteria for the evaluation of the results of microbiological controls, and that at present these results can only be evaluated by comparison with the findings of previous examinations.

The Committee on Agriculture assumes that the Commission will acquire the necessary basic statistics and information as soon as possible and then propose a further amendment to the directive, introducing fixed criteria for the evaluation of microbiological controls and thereby ensure that these controls are equally effective in all the Member States.

Conclusions

22. In the light of the foregoing the Committee on Agriculture asks the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection to incorporate the following points in its motion for a resolution:
- (a) Calls on the Council to bring the veterinary provisions of the Member States into line at the most stringent possible level;

<sup>1</sup>OJ No. L 55 of 8.3.1971, p. 23 et seq.

- (b) Expects the Commission and the Council to continue to explore the scope for a further agreement on common veterinary and health regulations;
- (c) Expects the Council promptly to adopt all additional proposals from the Commission for directives in the veterinary and health fields, after consulting the European Parliament;
- (d) Calls on the Commission to submit to the European Parliament, one year after the entry into force of the abovementioned five directives, a report on the approximation of legislation which has been implemented and also to indicate which approximations of legislation in the veterinary and health field are still necessary and are envisaged.

23. Re. I

The Committee on Agriculture

- takes the view that the revised version of the directive continues the process of removing the existing barriers to trade in meat resulting from differences in national health provisions,
- takes the view that consumer protection is improved as a result of the health checks on meat production provided for in the directive,
- approves, therefore, the proposal for a directive,
- urges the committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection to adopt the following proposed amendment to the Commission proposal:

Text proposed by the Commission  
of the European Communities

Amendment proposed by the  
Committee on Agriculture

Article 3(1)  
new subparagraph E

not applicable

E. The date of packaging must be indicated on fresh meat which is packed in high vacuum or in a defined atmosphere.

24. Re. II

The Committee on Agriculture

- is convinced that the amendment of the directive to take account of the scientific and technological advances made in the fields of hygiene and animal health is necessary,
- urges that trade with third countries should be subject to at least the same conditions concerning veterinary, hygiene, food and health provisions as intra-Community trade and that meat from slaughtered

imported animals and imported meat should comply with the food and health standards applicable in the Community Member States,

- notes that the amendments to the directive help to improve consumer protection,
- assumes that the amendments to the directive will bring about a harmonization of the provisions on the importation of bovine animals and swine and fresh meat from third countries and thereby help to improve trade,
- approves the proposal for a directive,
- calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection to adopt the following proposed amendment to the Commission proposal:

Text proposed by the Commission  
of the European Communities

Amendment proposed by the  
Committee on Agriculture

Article 1  
new paragraph 6a

not applicable

6a. Add the following to  
Article 16:  
'The date of packaging must  
be indicated on fresh meat  
which is packed in high vacuum  
or in a defined atmosphere.'

25. Re. III

The Committee on Agriculture

- takes the view that the proposed amendment to the directive will enable the Community herd to be protected more effectively against disease,
- is convinced that through the amendment to the directive the adverse effects on intra-Community trade as a result of barriers to trade due to animal disease can be restricted to the necessary minimum,
- approves the proposal for a directive
- calls on the Council to create the conditions for the definitive eradication of the animal diseases of tuberculosis, brucellosis and bovine leucosis.



26. Re. IV

The Committee on Agriculture

- is convinced that the proposal for a directive will make it possible to curb the misuse of antibiotics in the rearing of slaughter animals,
- assumes that as a result of the proposal for a directive account will be taken of health requirements by the setting of a tolerance for antibiotics which corresponds to the detection limit used in the Community method of examination ('zero tolerance'),
- considers the proposal for a directive as an appropriate means of restoring consumer confidence in the quality of meat,
- assumes that the proposal for a directive will make it possible to remove the barriers to trade which have arisen in connection with the residues of antibiotics previously detected in slaughter animals,
- calls on the Council to prohibit the systematic use in the breeding of animals for slaughter of antibiotics which, when the meat has been consumed, produce a resistance in the human body,
- considers, however, that the costs of random examinations for residues in which no residues are detected should not be apportioned among all slaughter animals but be borne by the Member States; therefore urges the Committee for the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection to adopt the following proposed amendment to the Commission proposal:

Text proposed by the Commission  
of the European Communities

Amendment proposed by the  
Committee on Agriculture

Article 7, first sentence

The costs of analysis of samples for the detection of antibiotic residues shall be apportioned among the total of slaughtered animals and shall be borne by the persons having the power of disposition of the above-mentioned animals.

The costs of analysis of samples for the detection of antibiotic residues shall be borne by the Member States.

27. Re. V

The Committee on Agriculture

- notes that the amendment to the directive will help to improve standards of hygiene in slaughterhouses and cutting plants and thereby improve consumer protection,
- approves, therefore, the Commission's proposal,
- expects the Commission to put forward proposals forthwith for a further amendment to the directive laying down fixed criteria for the evaluation of microbiological examinations.