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Foods from Cloned Animals

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Approved by:

Bobby Richey, Jr.
U.S. Embassy

Prepared by:

Dietmar Achilles

Report Highlights:

German press coverage of FDA and EFSA statements on the safety of clones and their products in the food supply has been numerous. The German Agricultural Minister publically stated his opposition to clones in the food supply. Also the German Farmers Association (DBV) has publically criticized the possibility.

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Food from Cloned Animals - Media Coverage

Press reports about the FDA risk assessment and the EFSA evaluation of meats and milk from cloned animals are found in most newspapers but did not make it on front pages. The German press pointed out that the FDA approval will not have any immediate market impact since there is no cloned meat or milk ready for commercialization. Articles also stress that there is a significant opposition identified in the U.S.A. against foods from cloned animals and political discussions about the feasibility of cloned food marketing is still underway. The reports indicate that cloning technology is still way too expensive for the regular food market. With regard to the EFSA evaluation journalists stress the fact that it is not binding for any political decision and that it is still temporary. Most of the German articles contain the reference that mortality and morbidity rates in clones are higher than in sexually reproduced animals.

Horst Seehofer, Minister of German Nutrition, Agriculture and Consumer Protection took the opportunity of large media interest at the opening of the International Green Week Trade Fair in Berlin to state his opposition against foods from cloned animals. Seehofer claimed ethical reasons for his opposition against cloned foods. He said that this topic should not be decided on the base of scientific or health arguments. He stated that cloned foods are a topic where the society should not tolerate everything which is technically possible. Seehofer indicated that animal cloning and food safety would be carefully researched and discussed in Germany in the future.

German papers also carried comments from the European Commission which stated that no imports of cloned meat were expected from the United States and that there are no indications that U.S. meat producers intend to start production of cloned meat in the foreseeable future.

The German Farmers Association (DBV) also publically stated its opposition to cloning of animals for food production. The DBV stated a fear that the variability of genetic resources would shrink over the time if cloning were adopted. The DBV press release can be viewed at <http://www.bauernverband.de/index.php?redid=202326>

Greenpeace so far avoided any discussion about potential health risks resulting from the consumption of cloned livestock products. They focus on ethical aspects and expect that German consumers would reject cloned products. Therefore such foods need to be labeled specifically.