

EU committee rejects clone food plan

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A genetically modified corn crop near Paillet in France. An EU parliamentary committee rejected a controversial proposal to allow food from cloned animals and their offspring onto the European market.

An EU parliamentary committee on Tuesday rejected a controversial proposal to allow food from cloned animals and their offspring onto the European market.

Planned legislation drawn up by the European Commission would authorise the sale of so-called "novel foods", made using algae or plankton, nanotechnology, with genetically modified crops or cloned animals, such as sheep.

But the parliament's environment committee voted almost unanimously, by 42 members for and two against with three abstentions, to exclude food from cloned animals and their offspring from the plans.

The Green group in the EU parliament said the environment committee, which was asked to give its opinion on authorising the "novel foods" -- had "sent a clear message".

"We don't want food from clones on our plates," said Green MEP Bert Staes.

"Cloning causes unnecessary harm to animals, while its long term [health risks](#) have not been sufficiently assessed," he added.

The Euro MPs instead called on the EU's executive to draw up a separate text to deal with the subject of cloned animals and keep it out of the larger legislation on non-standard foods.

The committee also called for a detailed risk assessment for foodstuffs produced by nanotechnology processes, it said should be clearly labelled.

Tuesday's vote must still be endorsed by the whole parliament, something which is pencilled in for a July session.

The final authorisation must be taken by co-decision, meaning either the parliament or the EU member states may block it.

The issue of cloning remains highly controversial in Europe, with a high level of opposition from citizens.

Even the European [Food](#) Safety Authority (EFSA) has voiced reservations about the future trade in cloned products, although the US [Food and Drug Administration](#) (FDA) has no problems with the issue.

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