

UK Watchdog Adviser: Cloned Cattle Meat Likely Safe

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Meat and milk from cloned cattle show no difference in composition from that of traditionally bred cows and so are unlikely to pose a food safety risk, an advisory committee to Britain's food safety regulator said.

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The European Commission has recently recommended introducing a five-year ban on the use of cloned animals for food production in the European Union. EU member states and the EU parliament are currently debating the proposal.

Meat or milk from the descendants of clones would not be subject to the ban.

Earlier this year, food safety watchdog the Food Standards Agency (FSA) said it had found that meat from the offspring of a cloned cow had entered the UK food chain and been eaten without required authorization.

Brendan Curran, a geneticist from Queen Mary, University of London, said the committee's conclusion was consistent with the findings of regulatory bodies in other countries.

"Food safety risks aside, however, there is an ethical dimension to this technology that causes concern," he said, adding that several studies had shown abnormalities in foetal development and in the neonates of cloned animals

"Therefore, one of the significant issues regulatory bodies must deal with in deciding whether to permit the use of cloned animals in breeding programs will be whether the usefulness of this technique in animal breeding outweighs its impact on animal wellbeing," Curran added.

The Soil Association, Britain's largest organic certification body, said in a statement on Friday that more research was required.

"It is not good enough to say that the meat and milk from cloned animals is 'unlikely' to pose a food safety risk. There are insufficient long-term studies into the impacts of cloned foodstuffs on human health," the Soil Association said.

Source: bdnews24.com