

FDA'S INTERNAL REPORT REVEALS THAT CONSUMERS DON'T WANT FOOD FROM CLONES - CITE CONCERNS ABOUT HEALTH

in

- [Human/Animal Cloning](#) [1]

SOURCE: American Anti-Vivisection Society, Center for Food Safety, Consumers Union, Farm Sanctuary, Food & W

AUTHOR: Press Release

URL: http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/CloningFOIApr3_18_08.cfm [2]

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Made Available under a Freedom of Information Act Request, Report Reveals Zero Percent of Those Surveyed Would Feed Food from Clones to their Children

March 17th, 2008 - A report commissioned by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) shows that the public does not want food from cloned animals, nor would they feed milk or meat from cloned animals to their children, it was revealed today. The report, ".Focus Groups on the Public's Perception on the Health Risk Associated with Products from Animal Clones", made available under the Freedom of Information Act, was written by the FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine. Despite the results of this focus group report and other reputable surveys showing high consumer concerns and an unwillingness to buy food from cloned animals, in January the FDA issued its risk assessment approving food from cloned animals and their offspring for human consumption without requiring labeling.

The FDA focus group survey, conducted in 2005, states that ".more than half of the participants across the board said that they would not want to eat food derived from clones. This figure is supported by public opinion polls.

Significantly, the FDA survey found that all those ".participants who have children said that they would not give such food to their children. The opinion survey also found:

- Each focus group had serious health concerns; ".many participants said that they would like to know the test results of eating products from animal clones on human health. Participants in all focus groups expressed concerns with the long-term effects of eating food from animal clones and their progeny. The report states that those interviewed were ".wary of what would happen in 10 to 20 years.

- In addition, some participants were concerned ".about negative mutations to the genetic makeup of the progeny of cloned animals, and did not consider the offspring of clones normal. They ".described the progeny of an animal clone as a 'half clone' or 'even worse than a clone' .

- The majority of participants in focus groups said more than once that ".they would like to know what specific benefits cloning would offer them, as many did not see any.

- Participants in each focus group had ethical concerns as well: ".They used the term 'playing God,' and considered cloning to be an intrusion of nature that 'cannot bring anything good' . Many participants said that ".They did not see the purpose of cloning farm animals; they were concerned that cloning farm animals is just a step in science that will lead to cloning humans in the future. A few interviewed ".speculated that food products from animal clones might already be on the market and they do not even know about it.

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- The FDA knew that some participants "expect food products from cloned animals and their progeny to be labeled as such. This assumption by some members may have informed the focus groups". discussion that food from clones would be identifiable, but no such requirement has been proposed by the FDA or other regulatory agencies.

".Surveys have repeatedly shown that consumers don't want food from cloned animals, said Rebecca Spector of the Center for Food Safety. ".This just-released information shows that FDA knew from their own two-year-old study that the public did not want food from clones, and wanted labels on milk or meat from clones so that they could avoid them. We currently have an FDA that that no longer acts in the public interest. In fact, they show a complete disregard for public opinion.

".It's clear that consumers are wary of cloning, said Julie Janovsky, director of campaigns at Farm Sanctuary. ".And there's no doubt that animals suffer as a result of this process. These are ample reasons alone to reject cloned products, both in the marketplace and on the farm.

".The FDA's decision to allow meat and milk from clones to reach consumers without any labeling is even more offensive in light of this evidence that the agency documented consumer concern about this technology, said Wenonah Hauter, executive director of Food & Water Watch. ".This reaffirms that FDA is more concerned with pleasing the biotechnology industry than in addressing the safety and ethical concerns consumers have about cloning.

As stated above, recent opinion polls show the majority of Americans do not want milk or meat from cloned animals in their food. A December 2006 poll by the Pew Initiative on Food and Biotechnology found that nearly two-thirds of U.S. consumers were uncomfortable with animal cloning. A national survey conducted this year by Consumers Union found that 89 percent of Americans want to see cloned foods labeled, while 69 percent said that they have concerns about cloned meat and dairy products in the food supply. A recent Gallup Poll reported that more than 60 percent of Americans believe that it is immoral to clone animals, while the Pew Initiative on Food and Biotechnology found that a similar percentage say that, despite FDA approval, they won't buy milk from cloned animals.

FDA REPORT REVEALED CONSUMERS ARE NOT BEHIND CLONES

SOURCE: Food Navigator, France

AUTHOR: Chris Jones

URL: <http://www.foodnavigator.com/news/ng.asp?n=84096-fda-cloned-food> [3]

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19-Mar-2008 - An internal report by the US FDA suggested that there was little or no support among Americans for food from cloned animals, a protest group has claimed.

The FDA issued its final risk assessment on produce from cloned animals and their offspring on January 15 in which it said the evidence showed there was no risk to human health. Such food products will not need to be labeled as originating from cloned animals.

But according to the Center for Food Safety and a number of other groups opposed to animal cloning, the FDA's own Center for Veterinary Medicine compiled a report in 2005 on focus groups' attitudes to the perceived health risks associated with products from cloned animals which stated that ".more than half of the participants across the board said that they would not want to eat food derived from clones"..

In particular, the internal FDA report, which the Center for Food Safety says recently became available through the Freedom of Information Act, said that all those ".participants who have children said that they would not give such food to their children"..

The anti-cloning groups said that the FDA's positive risk assessment on cloned food came ".despite the results of this focus group report and other reputable surveys showing high consumer concerns and an unwillingness to buy food from cloned animals"..

An FDA spokesperson was not available for comment prior to comment, but risk assessments look at

the scientific evidence for risk, rather than consumer perceptions of risk.

But in what some have seen as a bid to reassure consumers and prevent a possible blight on the image of American meat and milk in international markets, the FDA was transparent in including much raw data in its risk assessment report.

The newly available report indicates that public opinion on food from clones in the US mirrors that on genetically modified (GM) food in Europe, where consumers are unconvinced that there is sufficient scientific evidence to prove that such products are safe.

The FDA report said that ".many participants said that they would like to know the test results of eating products from animal clones on human health". and that they were concerned with the long-term effects of eating food from animal clones and their progeny and were ".wary of what would happen in 10 to 20 years".

In another echo of the GM debate taking place on the other side of the Atlantic, the majority of participants in focus groups said that ".they would like to know what specific benefits cloning would offer them"., as many did not see any, according to the report.

Some of those interviewed even speculated that food products from animal clones might already be on the market and they do not even know about it, the report said.

Many interviewees said that any food from clones should be clearly labeled as such - again mirroring Europe's insistence on labeling of GM products in order to allow consumers greater choice.

Rebecca Spector of the Center for Food Safety said the report shows ".[FDA] shows a complete disregard for public opinion".

The high cost of cloning animals (said to be between \$15,000 and \$20,000 per animal) means it is not economical at the present time to use such animals as sources of meat or milk. Instead, clones of the very best breeding stock are expected to be used to produce high quality offspring destined for human consumption or milk production.

Many food producers have already said they will not sell meat or milk from cloned animals or their offspring in a bid to head off potential consumer backlashes.

The FDA's own study is backed by evidence from recent opinion polls, which show the majority of Americans do not want milk or meat from cloned animals in their food. A national survey conducted this year by Consumers Union found that 89 per cent of Americans want to see cloned foods labeled, while 69 per cent said that they have concerns about cloned meat and dairy products in the food supply.

Concerns about the labeling of food from clones have led to a number of federal and state bills being introduced to require mandatory labels and plug the regulatory gap that opponents believe has been created by the FDA.

One such bill was debated Tuesday in the Health and Government Operations Committee in the Maryland House, where Jaydee Hanson, policy analyst at the Center for Food Safety, gave evidence.

She told the state rulers that the FDA's final risk assessment had been flawed because it was based on ".the limited data available for cattle and swine, and approves goat clones with virtually no data"..

She also said that the largest study of the safety of milk from cloned cattle looked at only 15 animals.

The passage of labeling legislation by the state of Maryland would ".help encourage the US Congress to pass labeling legislation introduced by Maryland's Senior Senator, Barbara Mikulski" Hanson said, and give consumers greater choice about what they eat.

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