



Brussels, 12 April 2011

**FVE/11/cor/009**

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and Industry

**RE:** Request to support amendment 353 (or 359) tabled on the EU regulation on the provision of food information to consumers - Amendments to label foods from animals not stunned before slaughter

**Dear Member of the European Parliament,**

As FVE, the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe, we are writing to you with regard to the second reading of the proposal for an EU regulation on the provision of food information to consumers and with particular reference to amendments 353, 359 and 354 (labelling of foods from animals not stunned before slaughter).

The FVE very much welcomed the European Parliament's vote (16 June 2010) in favour of labelling for meat from animals not stunned before slaughter but we were extremely disappointed by the EU Council decision (7 December 2010) to drop the plans for such labelling.

FVE believes that all animals should be effectively stunned before slaughter to improve their welfare at slaughter. However, as long as slaughter without stunning is permitted FVE has argued for any meat from this source to be clearly labelled to enable all consumers to make an informed choice when purchasing such products. As our President put it "*Consumers have the right to be informed if the meat is derived from an animal not stunned prior to slaughter*".

The FVE is indeed very concerned by the fact that in certain EU countries a high proportion of animals are killed without stunning, while the proportion of consumers of this type of meat is very small (around 3.5% of the whole population). Meat from these animals is sold on the domestic and export market, even to consumers who are unaware of the slaughter conditions.

**FVE therefore strongly urge you to support Amendment 353 (or Amendment 359): Meat products from special slaughter, for which the labelling would include 'Meat from slaughter without stunning'.**

President

Walter Winding

Vice-Presidents

Christophe Buhot  
Ljiljana Markuš  
Rainer Schneichel  
Stephen Ware

**In summary, FVE believes that all animals should be stunned before slaughter. But as long as slaughter without stunning is permitted, consumers should have the right to make an informed choice. We believe such labelling would go a long way to improve consumer choice and animal welfare, and would drive down the number of animals slaughtered without stunning.**

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**Background notes:**

1. Table: **Total percentage of animals slaughtered without prior stunning (source: DIALREL)**

Country	lamb	sheep
Belgium	40%	92%
France	80%	80%
Netherlands	?	80%
Spain	15%	20%
Austria	?	<5%
UK	5.2%	2%
Czech Republic	1%	0%
Cyprus	0.08%	0%
Germany	Marginal	marginal
Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Sweden	0%	0%

2. FVE position papers on slaughter:

- a. FVE Press Release 2009  
[http://www.fve.org/news/press\\_releases/2009\\_03\\_11\\_slaughter\\_without\\_prior\\_stunning](http://www.fve.org/news/press_releases/2009_03_11_slaughter_without_prior_stunning)
- b. Animal welfare at slaughter and killing (2006)  
[http://www.fve.org/news/position\\_papers/animal\\_welfare/fve\\_06\\_033\\_aw\\_slaughter.pdf](http://www.fve.org/news/position_papers/animal_welfare/fve_06_033_aw_slaughter.pdf)
- c. Slaughter without prior stunning (2002)  
[http://www.fve.org/news/position\\_papers/animal\\_welfare/fve\\_02\\_104\\_slaughter\\_prior\\_stunning.pdf](http://www.fve.org/news/position_papers/animal_welfare/fve_02_104_slaughter_prior_stunning.pdf)

3. The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) is an umbrella organisation of 44 veterinary organisations from 38 European countries, representing a total of around 200 000 veterinarians.

- 4 For further information, consult the FVE website <http://www.fve.org> or contact the FVE Secretariat on tel +32 2 533 70 20 or by e-mail to [info@fve.org](mailto:info@fve.org)