

**Following are important remarks from the European Commission Report to the European Parliament regarding research about the possibility of using electronic identification devices for cattle.**

January 25, 2005

Report from the European Commission to the European Parliament regarding the possibility of introducing electronic identification devices for cattle.

Number of animals in study:

370,000 cows

500,000 sheep

29,000 goats

15,000 buffalos

**Readability**

Problems have been reported using a dynamic reading system in slaughterhouses. The special circumstances in slaughterhouses (meaning the large amount of metal and interference of several machines being used) adversely influence the function of stationary readers.

**Results concerning recuperation**

For a variety of reasons it is essential that electronic identification devices can be recuperated. For example, electronic identification devices are electronic waste (electronic waste, contaminated with organic material) that should be kept out of the human food chain and environment. In addition, electronic identification devices have to be recuperated in order to prevent fraud.

The results of recuperation with electronic earmarks and stomach capsules show that there are few recuperation problems in slaughterhouses and that the readability is still good.

With injectable transponders (microchips) the entire situation is different. Only 80% could be recuperated and only 52% of those were readable. Somehow the extraction process has a negative influence on the readability of the devices.

### **Injectable transponder**

Disadvantage: Recuperation of injectable transponders is low in comparison with other identification devices. Therefore, the risk that identification devices will get into the human food chain is higher than with other identification methods used. Only about half of the recuperated transponders are still readable after

extraction, which means that crosschecking and proper documentation is difficult.

## **Conclusion**

All types of identification devices must be kept out of the human food chain. Due to problems associated with locating and recuperating injectable transponders, these devices are less favourable than other forms of identification.