



Government of Botswana



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Public Private Dialogue on Beef Value Chain Development From Assets to Investments

Beef voluntary labelling in Europe, the Italian situations and forthcoming prospects

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Unicarve: Beef producers association

- 1000 associated beef producers in all North East of Italy
- 300.000 head slaughter per year (bulls, heifers, veal calves)
- 20 slaughter houses and processors
- Main activities:
 - Traceability and quality systems
 - Consulting at different levels (economic, technical...)
 - Services to farmers (purchase and selling contracts, insurances...)

Unicarve, with other associations in all Italy, is part of Italia Zootechnica, an association to represent beef producers at national level

Why labelling?

Due to the beef market's instability caused by the BSE crisis, in order to maintain and reinforce consumers' trust with more transparency on production condition and all market transfers, especially with regards to traceability, it was considered necessary to develop a system with the aim of offering the consumer a label with complete and assuring information

Beef Labelling in Europe:

Regulation CE 1760/00 establishes a system of identification and registration of bovine livestock, beef and products of beef processing and all beef-based food

Aim or labelling

Complete transparency on beef market. Clear rules for the transmission to consumers of the basic obligatory of origin, rearing and slaughter; for all further indications a common law system is needed: the voluntary labelling system

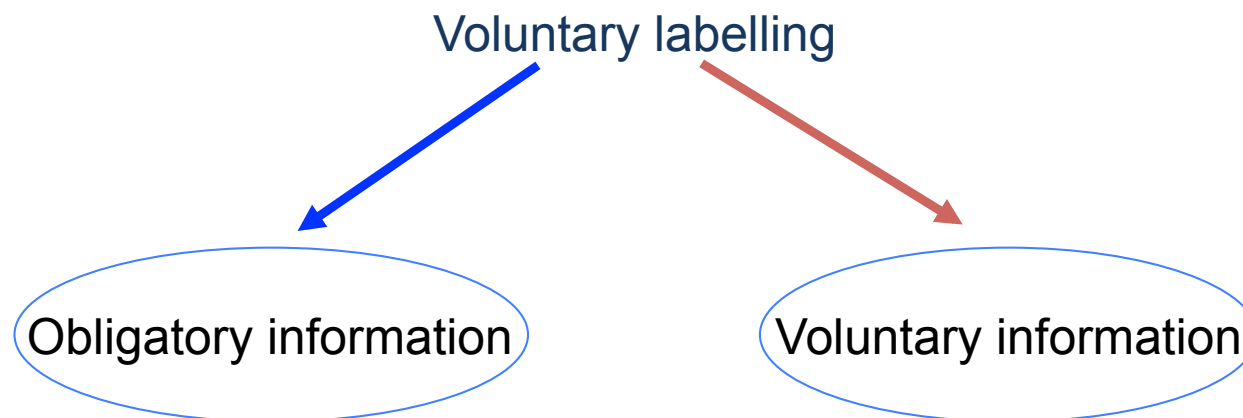
An efficient and reliable voluntary labelling system must entail the possibility to trace the animals from a portion or a cut of meat

The operating rules to guarantee that, must be written on a code of conduct (“specifications”) admitted by a national authority (Ministry of Agriculture).

Reg. CE 1760/00

The system of identification and registration of animals includes the following elements:

- Ear tags
- Databases
- Animal Passports
- Animal farm registry



Information provided

Obligatory information:

- Identification code of animal (ear tag, batch...)
- Slaughterhouse [Country] [UE Identification code]
- Processor [Country] [UE identification code]
- Country of animal birth
- Country/ies of animal breeding

Voluntary information:

Any operator who wants to label beef with more information than those obligatory must be authorized by the Ministry of Agriculture.

The activity consists in direct control on all chain operators by the owner of a specifications code and a third body surveillance.

Reg. CE 1760/00 – Examples of voluntary info

Approved Information:	
Animal date of birth	No gmo feedstuff
Gender	No use of antibiotics
Genetic Types	Do use of growing factors
Name and place of breeding farm	Period of suspension of therapeutic treatments
Period of stay in last farm before slaughter	Name of slaughterhouse
Race	Date of slaughter
Characteristics of breeding system	Category
Feeding plan	Name of processor
No animal-origin fat ingredients added to feedstuff	Beef maturing duration

Note: For some information a period of minimum 4 months must be indicated

Benefits of labelling

Cattle breeders:

- Tools to better manage all breeding activities
- Show their “face” to consumers, getting closer to them
- Obtain the EU subsidy to farmers belonging to labelling systems

Benefits for consumers:

- Traceability
- Transparency
- Trust and chance to choose with knowledge

Benefits for Unicarve:

- Work activity, constant control on all operators of beef production chain (over 700 farms, 15 slaughter houses, 100 retailers...)
- Helping producers giving tools and consulting to get closer to consumers
- Enter the farm gates to give more services (consulting and assistance with managing, feeding plans, environment issues...)

Implementation of labelling

Important steps to implement labelling:

- Improve traceability tools:
 - Electronic ear tags
 - Increase use of computers in farms to reduce costs and labour

Challenges during implementation:

- Costs
- Delay on computer use in agriculture

Changes in voluntary labelling

With the end of 2007-2013(14) term of application of the economic Agricultural Policy and the new proposals the EU has taken the decision to cancel the voluntary labelling of beef, leaving to countries the possibility to extend it at national level.

In Italy the majority of operators has shown interest in keeping the system as it is working nowadays, but the decision is not yet taken.

If the decision will be to cancel it, producers will be free to communicate info on labels at their responsibility, resulting in:

- Less control
- Less transparency to consumers
- More anonymous beef

Regional and national beef quality labels

A chance for Italian beef producers to defend and promote their products is the establishment of Beef Production specifications, real product labels such as the “Cereal Fed Bull/Heifer” beef, already authorized at regional level and under authorization process at national level.

The aim is to keep a controlled system of communication of voluntary labelling and promote a product with a certified production system, with rules concerning health and welfare, selected quality feedstuff and of course clear traceability of animals and all feeding ingredients

Thank You



**ASSOCIAZIONE PRODUTTORI
CARNI BOVINE DEL TRIVENETO**



Consorzio L'Italia Zootechnica