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N.G.A. Urges FDA to Proceed with Animal Biotechnology Initiatives

ARLINGTON, Virginia (September 19, 2002) — The National Grocers Association (N.G.A.) is recommending that the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) move forward with the animal biotechnology initiatives currently being advanced by The National Academy of Sciences (NAS). The Academy recently reported that meat and milk from cloned animals and their offspring should be allowed into the food supply.

“The Academy is internationally respected for its scientific research and we concur with their statement and position,” said Thomas K. Zaucha, N.G.A. President & CEO. “We encourage the Food & Drug Administration to work with the appropriate personnel in the scientific community to ensure guidelines are established that will provide the American consumer safeguards from genetic manipulation and environmental abuses.”

Zaucha added that the protection of the animal’s well being should also be reviewed with specific measures provided that condemns abuses of factory animal farming. “With an ever-growing population and a need to provide healthy and nutritious food, N.G.A. encourages efforts of food producers and processors to search for more efficient methods of increasing the production of our food supply in a safe and humane manner,” he said.

N.G.A. believes that animal biotechnology provides extensive benefits for the consumer including greater price value and healthy food. N.G.A. also advocates proper research, diverse input, appropriate oversight and well-defined guidelines in harnessing great advances of technology.

Under the plans of livestock breeders who are already raising scores of clones on American farmsteads, milk from cloned cows and meat from the offspring of cloned cows and pigs could appear on grocery shelves as early as next year.

N.G.A. is the national trade association representing the retail and wholesale grocers that comprise the independent sector of the food distribution industry. An independent retailer is a privately owned or controlled food retail company operating in a variety of formats. Some are publicly traded but with controlling shares held by the family and others are employee owned. Most independent operators are serviced by wholesale distributors, while others may be partially or fully self-distributing. Independents are the true “entrepreneurs” of the grocery industry and dedicated to their customers, associates, and communities. N.G.A. members include retail and wholesale grocers and their state associations, as well as manufacturers and service suppliers.