Accepted Manuscript

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PII: S0924-2244(15)00122-3

DOI: 10.1016/j.tifs.2015.05.001

Reference: TIFS 1660

To appear in: Trends in Food Science & Technology

Received Date: 2 February 2015

Revised Date: 6 May 2015

Accepted Date: 7 May 2015

Please cite this article as: Lievens, A., Petrillo, M., Querci, M., Patak, A, Genetically modified animals: options and issues for traceability and enforcement, *Trends in Food Science & Technology* (2015), doi: 10.1016/j.tifs.2015.05.001.

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Genetically modified animals: options and issues for traceability and enforcement

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7 Abstract

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The past two decades have witnessed the rise of commercial crops that have been genetically modified for an increased suitability in extensive cultivation. Currently, a substantial body of research is being carried out in order to produce Genetically Modified (GM) animals that may similarly yield improvements in animal breeding, genetics and reproduction. Here, we attempt a comprehensive review of the existing trails at animal modification with commercial applications and aimed at a deliberate release onto the market. In addition, we investigate detection and quantification options within the frame of food/feed control and traceability on the European market.

⁸ Keywords: genetically modified animals, transgenic, detection,

⁹ quantification, traceability, food chain, consumer protection

10 Introduction

Over the past 30 years, biotechnological developments have allowed sci-11 entists to alter the genetic make-up of bacteria, plants, and animals. Initially, 12 these modifications have served the purpose of basic research (the study of 13 gene function and genetic mechanisms), but these techniques quickly became 14 promising tools from agricultural point of view since they allow the addition 15 of novel traits to organisms which may increase their suitability for use in ex-16 tensive mono-cultures (e.q. animals with better neonatal survival, or plants 17 with herbicide resistances and insect tolerances). The first genetically mod-18 ified organisms (GMOs) for agricultural use were introduced in 1996 and 19 currently, more than 170 million hectares of GM crops are being cultivated 20 worldwide (James, 2010, 2011) and while genetically modified (GM) animals 21

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